

# AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

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JANUARY 11, 1941

## WHO'S WHO

B. H. M. VLEKKE was formerly professor of history at the Catholic College of Maastricht, Holland. Thereafter, he became Secretary General of the Dutch Historical Institute in Rome, and was attached to the Dutch Embassy. After the domination of Holland by Hitler, the Dutch Legation was closed by the Italian Government, and Dr. Vlekke was forced to leave. He was held up in France for about five weeks, because of the difficulties in entering Spain. After a rapid trip through Spain, he was again detained for about two months in Portugal, but finally reached the United States in late October. He has published several historical books in Dutch and has been nominated as Research Fellow at Harvard University. . . . REV. JOHN J. CONNOLLY is the Director of the Catholic Guild for the Blind of the Archdiocese of Boston. We trust that the work being done in Boston may be emulated in other parts of the country. . . . B. B. BROWN is a convert to Catholicism and former contributor to the non-Catholic press. . . . JOHN C. LeCLAIR, professor in history at City College, New York, is a specialist in international affairs. . . . ELIZABETH DREW is the author, in collaboration with John L. Sweeney, of the recently published volume, *Directions in Modern Poetry*. . . . AMONG THE POETS are Robert Speaight, the well known English actor; Robert David O'Brien, professor at Boston College; Sister Mary Thecla, Notre Dame of Maryland; Sister Mary Thecla, Commercial High School, New Haven, Conn.; Sister Mary Ada of Utica, N. Y. . . . A. HYATT MAYOR appears as our art critic for the first time. He is Assistant Curator of prints at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.

## THIS WEEK

COMMENT . . . . . 366

### GENERAL ARTICLES

Holland Awaits the Moment to Strike Back at the Nazis. . . . . Dr. B. H. M. Vlekke 369  
A Few Problems in the Pacific. . . . . John C. LeClair 372  
Catholic Action Applied to Those Who Cannot See. . . . . John J. Connolly 374  
That All May Be One in the Mystical Body  
Beatrice B. Brown 376

EDITORIALS . . . . . 378

Olive Branch or Machine Gun? . . . We Ask . . .  
Costly Unions . . . Almost True . . . We Go to War  
. . . The Hidden Life.

CORRESPONDENCE . . . . . 381

### LITERATURE AND ARTS

Novels by Hamlet with a Camera  
Elizabeth Drew 382

POETRY . . . . .

Song for Epiphany. . . . . Sister Mary Thecla 383  
To a Christkind. . . . . Sister Mary Maura 384  
In Tempore Belli. . . . . Robert Speaight  
Dark Angel. . . . . Robert David O'Brien  
Star Folk. . . . . Sister Mary Ada

BOOKS . . . . . REVIEWED BY 385

The President Makers. . . . . William A. Carey  
Pageant of Letters. . . . . J. G. E. Hopkins  
Mind Through the Ages. . . . . Joseph Bluett  
Word-Hoard. . . . . E. J. Farren

ART. . . . .  
. . . . . A. Hyatt Mayor 389

THEATRE . . . . . Elizabeth Jordan 390

FILMS . . . . . Thomas J. Fitzmorris 391

EVENTS . . . . . The Parader 392

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Editor-in-Chief: FRANCIS X. TALBOT.

Associate Editors: PAUL L. BLAKELY, JOHN LAFARGE, GERARD DONNELLY,  
JOHN A. TOOMEY, ALBERT I. WHELAN, HAROLD C. GARDINER, J. GERARD MEARS.

Editorial Office: 329 W. 108TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY.

Business Manager: ALBERT I. WHELAN.

Business Office: 53 PARK PLACE, NEW YORK CITY.

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# COMMENT

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SUNDAY EVENING, December 29, President Roosevelt delivered an historic message. So was it intended by him, and so was it accepted in the United States, in both Americas, and in the lands beyond the two oceans. Reduced to its simplest terms, it served notice that the United States was prepared to enter war against Germany, Italy and Japan. The President rejected peace, unless the Axis powers agreed to abandon their policies and gave assurances of their sincerity. He sought no methods of appeasement. He expressed determination to aid Great Britain with every mechanical device and with every material product. Spiritually, morally, ethically, he allied the United States with England. His December fireside chat was the culmination of his thoughts, probably, for the past two years, or even for a longer period. Those of us who have followed events carefully, and have observed the trend of the President's mind, have known that such a declaration was inevitable, that it would be delivered as soon as the people of the United States were psychologically prepared to receive it. The case for war has been built up, item by item. The necessity for American involvement has been given weight, by added pound on pound. Mind after mind has been smoothly persuaded that this country can best be defended by immediate aid to England, even to the extent of war. The President will lead. The nation will follow. The President has declared our intentions. The executives under him will plan and execute the methods. The United States is not technically at war, but it is in war, in all ways short of sending men. The men will go, eventually, we believe. Seamen and airmen will be the first. And then, we venture to prophesy, if the back of Hitler's offensive is broken, men will go to fight on the soil of occupied Europe. In stating our beliefs, we have gone beyond the present declaration of President Roosevelt. The country is not yet prepared for such a statement. Listening intently to the President's address, and recollecting impressions later, we thought that the President failed to draw a logical conclusion. If his premises were true and correct, if the reasons for his attitude were sound, he was justified in drawing no other conclusion than that of advocating war immediately. Hereafter, it might not be possible to gain his objectives. Now would be the time to strike. Perhaps we need to be better prepared, so that we may not be too much startled when the gong sounds.

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COMPULSORY flag saluting by school children is an issue not quite so dead as our readers might think. Last summer, in the Minersville case, the Supreme Court handed down an amazing decision which sounded very little like a legal opinion and very much like a bit of stream-of-consciousness

prose. The Court held that a Pennsylvania school board was justified in compelling two small Jehovah's Witnesses to salute the flag, and it ruthlessly overrode their plea that this act would violate their deepest religious convictions. Thus the question, agitated in a number of the States, was thought to be closed for good and all. But two days before Christmas a flag-salute ordinance, passed by another Pennsylvania school board, became effective, and when eleven children stood by their consciences and flatly refused to obey, they were suspended. So the fat is in the fire again, and doubtless other little Witnesses in Pennsylvania and elsewhere will thumb their small noses at the Frankfurter opinion. Meanwhile a Federal judge, handling a similar case of 19 children in Minnesota, contrived a practical compromise. He found that the school authorities would be satisfied with a pledge of allegiance to the United States, without a physical salute to the flag; he found that the Witnesses, adamant in their refusal to raise their hands in salute to the flag, were willing to utter a pledge of allegiance to the nation. Through this solution the Rochester, Minn. children were readmitted to the schools. It is a compromise that might well be tried in other localities where the issue is raised, but of course it is merely a compromise. Only when the august Court reverses itself and upholds religious freedom will the question be settled rightly and finally.

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SCIENCE is wonderful. There are certain aspects of it, however, that are too much for us. The more we learn of the modern scientific mind the less sure we are that we want to have anything to do with it. Take the case of the hitherto unself-conscious town "forty miles from the Pacific coast and one hundred miles north of San Francisco," where New York University has established a laboratory for the sociological study of all phases of modern community life, with an eye to "cultural change" and "cultural integration." The survey embraces such wide fields as "the place of women in culture, the pre-adolescent child, ecology, subsistence economy, legal psychology, religion, public opinion, mobility, the infant, death, aboriginal money, the dance, the deviant and the female migrant." That is a large order, in spite of the obvious omissions (the place of *scientists* in culture; hats; lack of religion; sleep; liquor, etc.). But we do not think that the population of this test tube town, which is largely composed of Pomo Indians, Italians and Mexicans, is going to like having a gang of scientists from New York poking into their ecology and asking uncomfortable questions about how they spend their Saturday nights and how often they take a bath. We do not think the "female migrants" are going to like having a scientist, notebook in hand, trail-



ing them all over the West, either. Some scientists are going to get black eyes along with other things. Well, you have to have something for scientists of the "pre-doctorate level" to do and as long as they keep away from us and pick on Pomo Indians, we will not complain. But if we proposed that the large amount of money involved be spent on a church and a hospital to care for the souls and bodies of these human guinea-pigs we would probably be put down as a "deviant" and a serious obstacle to cultural integration. But you mark our words—the Pomo Indians are not going to take this sitting down.

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SAFETY experts have been working for some years to eliminate the dangerous railroad grade-crossing, and with such success that in a majority of the States, they have been replaced by bridges or under-passes. But we still permit fools to operate huge machines in our crowded city streets, even though these fools kill about 30,000 persons yearly. The chief agency for the making of these criminal fools is, of course, alcohol, and their number is growing. Twice as many fatal accidents were caused by them in 1939, according to an article in the *Quarterly Journal of Studies in Alcohol*, as in 1933. There is but one way of meeting this national peril, and that is to deprive every intoxicated man found at the wheel of a car of his license to drive, whether he has killed anyone or not. Give him time enough, and he will help to increase the death-rate.

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When did the Dutch surrender to Hitler?  
 Were there many fifth columnists in Holland?  
 Explain what braille is.  
 Why is Soerbaya Naval Base being enlarged?  
 Where is it?  
 Is there more cruelty in the world today than in the Middle Ages?  
 What percentage of voters belonged to the Catholic party in Holland?  
 Do you remember anything about the Third Hague Conference?  
 What parties are now struggling for mastery in Holland?  
 How many blind Catholics are there in the United States?  
 Name some dangers implicit in American participation in Pacific power-politics.  
 Do writers create the Time-Spirit?  
 Have you any opinion about Luther and the Mystical Body of Christ?  
 What is the food situation in Holland?  
 How would you teach the Mass to a blind person?  
 Name some employment in which blind persons are engaged.  
 Should the United States help Great Britain police the South Pacific?  
 What is the real achievement of the modern novel?  
 How do the Marxists achieve an organized scheme of literary values?  
 (The answers to these questions may be found in the articles that follow.)

THE CHRONICLE is no more. We of the editorial staff lament its passing. For nearly thirty-two years it has been a feature of AMERICA. Pages 1, 2, 3, 4, of Number One, of Volume One, were devoted to *Chronicle*. Every week thereafter, with never an omission, the *Chronicle* reported faithfully the events of the world. In its earliest style, the *Chronicle* was a combination of notable news-items and editorial comment. About the time of the World War, it became an objective summary of contemporary history. It retained that character through the 'twenties and 'thirties. All that savored of editorializing was sternly blue-pencilled. It was a department without bias, either in its inclusions or its silences, either in its clear notes or its undertones. Through all the years before 1936, the *Chronicle* occupied at least four pages, and was written in a sequential style, tersely telling a complete story. At the change of the format, however, the space was reduced to two pages, and the news was summarized in headline-fashion. All through the years, the *Chronicle* represented the combined efforts of the members of the editorial Staff. The world was divided among the editors, and the editors were specialists in their own divisions. It was found more advisable, during the past few years, to have a unified approach toward current topics, and to depute a single editor to sift and evaluate and record the items. Very few of our readers knew to whom they were indebted for this service. It is due, then, to *Chronicle*, when the *Chronicle* is no more, that Editor John A. Toomey, S.J., has been laboriously and faithfully and singly writing the *Chronicle*, week by week, for more than three years. We pay him the highest tribute for a difficult work excellently done. For a long time, the editorial Staff has been speculating on the need and the value of this department. Strong sentimental reasons counselled that it should be continued as always. But practical considerations and changed conditions could not be neglected. During the earlier years, the *Chronicle* was an exclusive AMERICA feature, of substantial value concurrently to our readers and as an historic depository. To our knowledge, no other Catholic periodical and very few other publications offered such a service. But then came the flair for news-magazines devoted wholly to the *Chronicle* of the week. Then the newspapers began to issue their daily summaries of events, in concise form. Then rose the radio, reaching the peak in the number of news-bulletins, condensing the facts to a few sentences hour by hour. Where AMERICA was alone in the field some years ago, AMERICA finds itself in a crowded arena now. One cannot avoid, these times, hearing the *Chronicle* shouted from dozens of sources, as one found it difficult, in times before, to secure a news summary of this sort. Our space is limited, and our problem was: could the two pages now given over to the *Chronicle* be utilized to greater advantage. The members of the Staff unanimously agreed that the day of our news-jottings had passed, and that the *Chronicle* department should be merged with the *Comment* section. We are very much interested in learning how our readers feel about the suppression of the *Chronicle*.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago there were 2,881,561 Catholics in Canada. The census for 1939, published by the Quebec *Almanac of Catholic Action*, enumerates 4,662,970 Catholics; 63,238 more than in 1936. Institutions of every sort have doubled in number. The Church's growth in Canada reflects immigration and a tradition of large families. The grave question remains, whether this growth will continue, with immigration practically at an end and the country becoming more industrialized.

BOMBING does not deter the Catholic press in Great Britain. The *Dublin Review* for October, 1940, is here on hand, and as vigorous as ever. New editor of the veteran quarterly (founded in 1836) is Christopher Dawson. He believes that Catholic writers and thinkers have no part in the artificial division between "The Left" and "The Right" which was derived from post-War politics. "European civilization," says Dawson, "is fighting a battle on two fronts against enemies that are cooperating for its destruction and if it is to survive it must base its resistance on its own spiritual resources and not on ideologies borrowed from its enemies." Even in the United States we are learning how extremes come to meet. As Barbara Ward observes, in the same issue of the *Dublin Review*, discussing the fall of France: "Defeatism on the Right and on the Left was encouraged from Berlin."

ALL educators, and Catholic educators with them, come to agree more and more that the school must consider realistically the vocational future of their alumni. Over 100 Christian Brothers, of the California district, met at Moraga, Calif., during Christmas week, for their annual educational convention and devoted themselves to the very live topic of student Vocational Guidance.

ACROSS the water, Archbishop Downey of Liverpool declared: "Even amidst the din of battles we must clear our minds, purify our hearts and steel our wills if we are to bring this war to a really successful issue." Cardinal Hinsley, Archbishop of Westminster, told his people: "From the point of view of eternity and in the light of Calvary, the grave hour through which we are passing may be regarded as a grace from God rather than as a chastisement. It is an opportunity for heroic courage and for the proof of our Christian charity."

TWO little children, aged about seven and eight years, died some 40,000 years ago in a cavern in Syria. Their bones were recently discovered by the Rev. John C. Doherty, S.J., of the Boston College Department of Anthropology. Father Doherty believes these remains—showing a straight chin and a straight forehead—point the way to a link between Neanderthal man and modern man. Are those little innocents, now in Limbo, aware of the help they gave unwittingly to modern science?

AT the third annual convention of the American Catholic Sociological Society, held in Chicago during Christmas week, the Rev. John P. Farrell, chap-

lain of the Pontiac Reformatory at Pontiac, Ill., made a brief but emphatic charge. The community, he insisted, must learn its responsibility as to keeping boys out of prison. The same view was taken by speakers who followed Father Farrell, such as T. P. Sullivan, Director of Parole Supervision in the State of Illinois and Joseph A. Walsh, of the Chicago Juvenile Court. In spite of the vast number of agencies which focus upon the problems of the young criminal, the root causes of delinquency have not yet been attacked, said Mr. Walsh. How the community itself can be organized to deal with such a question was described by Joseph Meegan, executive secretary of the famous Back of the Yards Council in Chicago. Local clergy join in this district with organized business, civic and fraternal organizations, labor (both A.F. of L. and C.I.O.), to handle *by themselves*, minus external intervention, the matter of bringing order, hope and opportunity into a disorganized and rapidly degenerating community.

PREACHING on Christmas night, Archbishop McNicholas of Cincinnati warned against propaganda to force the United States into war as the work of a ten-per-cent minority of the American people. "Capitalism in our country," said the Archbishop, "is blindly moving into war, not fully realizing that it is digging its own grave." At this time, he added, "we should also make every effort to produce and to conserve all the food that we possibly can, because the generosity and charity of America at no distant date will be called upon to feed a shattered, starving and diseased world."

DURING the year 1940, 2,369 men made a closed Retreat at the Franciscan House of Retreats in Mayslake, Ill. With such a showing in but one of a host of similar units in the laymen's Retreat movement, there appears to be no indication that American Catholic manhood is growing soft.

ACCORDING to the Associated Press of December 30, the Vatican radio of that date declared that the Holy Father had been hindered in his war-relief efforts. "During the last war everything seemed to be done to facilitate the work of charity of the Vatican," the broadcast asserted. "During the present war, despite all the Holy Father's efforts, everything seems to hinder this work." No names were mentioned. The denial of even impartial relief to prisoners seems to be the utmost phase of total war.

CATHOLIC trade-unionists are vigorously supporting the four-weeks-old strike of sales girls against the Neisner dime stores in Detroit. According to the *Michigan Labor Leader*, A.C.T.U. organ, efforts of Mayor Edward J. Jeffries, Council President John W. Smith, the State Labor Mediation Board and the Federal Department of Labor have all been rejected by the Neisner Company, as well as the united demand of organized labor in Detroit. In the A.C.T.U. opinion, any assistance given to the Neisner strikers is a corporal work of mercy.



# HOLLAND AWAITS THE MOMENT TO STRIKE BACK AT THE NAZIS

DR. B. H. M. VLEKKE

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A MIDDLE-AGED gentleman, looking well-to-do and quite prosperous, walks along one of the more quiet streets of New York. He is not in a hurry, he seems even a bit sleepy, he is at least dreaming. But as he gets more and more into the center of the city, he quickens his pace, wakes up, steps along briskly, grows more and more youthful every minute and, finally, hurries quickly and skilfully through the roaring traffic.

But just before attaining his goal our gentleman finds obstacles blocking his path, gets mixed up with an excited crowd, is suddenly knocked over the head by a gigantic neighbor and falls down. . . .

That is the way Holland went along during the last century of her history. But with the knockout blow the story is not ended. The episode of the fourteen seconds of the Tunney-Dempsey match repeats itself. Our gentleman lies prostrate for a moment, then he begins to look around, sees that he is not so badly off after all, and his opponent is quite worried. Slowly he gets to his feet again. The fighting starts once more.

## HOLLAND IS DEFEATED

On May 15, the Dutch Army Commander surrendered with nearly all his troops, out-manuevered by the better prepared and overwhelmingly stronger Germans. What else could we expect? Of course everybody hoped against hope, but the final disaster was really not the fault of our soldiers.

It may be useful to state—whatever may have been published to the contrary by newspapers or proclaimed by German propaganda—that according to all reliable information, there were only a few Dutch citizens who played the traitorous role of fifth columnists and helped the enemy to disorganize our defense system. Nevertheless, the people of Holland, a few miserable traitors excepted, felt hopelessly lost and desperate when the Germans entered the Hague and Amsterdam.

For a while, this feeling threatened to grow into fatal resignation and submission to the fate that had befallen our highly cultivated and peace-loving nation. When France had capitulated, too, and escape seemed impossible, many Netherlands lost hope in the future restoration of liberty. The sentiments of the less educated even turned for a moment against our Queen, who had reluctantly left her home to save the independence of our overseas Empire. A former Premier wrote a brochure, in which he advised us to accept the new situation and

to carry on as well as possible in collaboration with the Germans. Working people who formerly had been members of the socialistic labor-movement, because they expected from that quarter the highest material profits, flocked now to the new National-Socialistic organizations for the same reasons.

## GERMANY ATTEMPTS CONCILIATION

The German invader, well aware how aimless and bewildered was public opinion at that time, maneuvered skilfully and did all he could to conciliate Dutch sentiments. A few arrests had occurred in the beginning, but afterward most of those who had been arrested were released. Even the Jews were not molested at first.

The Germans took possession of the newspapers and obliged them to print the information provided by Berlin, but, again, the regimentation was quite moderate. The outward form of the papers was maintained. A Catholic daily whose presses were destroyed in the bombardment of Rotterdam, was now published on the press of its former liberal rival in the same city. The National-Socialistic leaders, who had hoped to gain immediate power in the Government as a reward for their treachery were disappointed, for no changes were made.

What the Germans wanted was the full cooperation of the whole people. They had the illusion that everyone would accept the new situation—especially as the fall of Britain seemed imminent—and that an outward form of political unity could be created, that would result in such satisfactory plebiscites as Hitler had organized in Germany: 95 per cent even 99 per cent in support of the Government.

This illusion was followed however by a complete disillusionment. "The Dutch," wrote a German weekly paper in September, "are waiting impatiently and waiting unwillingly for a further decision. They do not understand that this decision has fallen long ago! They will not be resigned. They are still looking to London. They are too slow to realize what happened to them. . . ."

This is really the grandest compliment that could have been paid to the common sense of the majority of the Dutch people. Indeed, the Dutch *are* slow to trust in Mr. Hitler, his goodwill to our nation, his promises and his flatteries. "Holland must turn her face away from Asia and the Indies," says the weekly quoted above, "and turn to Europe and facts." Of course they will have to do so, if Mr. Hitler wins this war, for he has given away the

Dutch East Indies to his yellow-skinned friend, Japan (O, theory of the racial glory of the Aryans!) even before those lands are conquered.

Before the *Dutch* are going to believe what they are told by the *Völkischer Beobachter*—for instance, that Britain will be beaten and that Hitler will visit Westminster—they want to *see* it! And Mr. Seyss-Inquart, our Governor General for Hitler, is really angry about that.

A few other significant incidents occurred, which tell their own story. British fliers, who came down in Holland, disappeared and could not be found anywhere. A Dutch radio-reporter, who talked too enthusiastically over the air about Nazism, was, on his return to Amsterdam, attacked by a crowd and finished off in a moment. Young men escaped in fishing boats to England and Dutch fliers came over from that country and landed at night in desolate spots in occupied territory to take other volunteers back with them. Of course, nobody knew anything about it. A huge reward for the traitor who would help to discover the landing fields, is still available. On the birthday of Prince Bernard, who had behaved so courageously in the crucial days of war, fighting like a common soldier—the Royal Palace in the Hague was decorated with flowers by the public. On another occasion, a riot occurred in the same city between Dutch Nazis and the public. The police had to go into action and clubbed so joyfully on the heads of the Nazis, that several of them were killed! The Germans had to come to their rescue and German airplanes threatened the Hague with reprisals. Notwithstanding all orders from the Governor, the birthday of Queen Wilhelmina was celebrated with fireworks. It had strictly been forbidden to wear orange flowers or emblems. Happily the Amsterdam Streetcar Company issued orange-colored tickets for a special section. Everyone went out of his way to get one and stuck it on his hat.

The policy of conciliation miscarried completely. The Dutch refused, after a few weeks of hesitation, to cooperate in the famous new European order of Adolf Hitler. It was made quite clear that restoration of their independence was the preliminary condition. The brochures written in July and August, as well as the development of political events, proved this beyond doubt.

#### HOLLAND'S POLITICAL BACKGROUND

The German administration had left some liberty of press and speech in the first weeks, as I have said. Of course, the National-Socialist Party, under Mussert, had all the advantages of the situation, for it has always agreed with the opinions of the conquerer. This party had obtained nearly fifteen per cent of the votes in a general election about four years ago. Since then it had gone down steadily and has felt the repercussions of its great friend Hitler's gambling with peace and the indignant reaction against his religious persecutions. This war, and the German invasion, were indeed Mussert's last chance to come into power. So this leader of a party which called itself Dutch and National, spurred his followers on to act for Ger-

many, to stab their own soldiers in the back and finally to commit complete treason. After May his chance had come but, to his surprise, the Germans supported him but half-heartedly and the other political parties in the country, which, until now, had been divided on religious as well as on political grounds, found the time ripe for a counter-action because of this new unity.

The most curious phenomenon of Dutch political life—a fact wholly unknown in American politics—is the dominating influence of religious persuasion on political divisions. Holland had a Catholic party, supported by about 33 per cent of the voters, two Protestant groups, and a liberal party, backed mainly by people who were indifferent about dogma. The Socialist-Labor Party, boasting of nearly 28 per cent of the votes, included intellectuals and teachers, as well as laborers. These different groups were now unified by the menace of a German-supported Nazism that would become the haven of refuge for those people whose only principle is to gain, at all costs, a good living. Of those high minded individuals, alas, there is a great number in every country.

#### NATIONAL UNION FAILS

The Democratic parties tried to unite in a "National Union." The German censor protested against the first draft of their program, because it spoke of the "independence of the Netherlands" and of "liberty and fidelity to the House of Orange." This caused the failure of the Union as a combination of existent parties. Some well-meaning Netherlands, with Mr. Linthorst Homan, Governor of the Province of Groningen as their leader, attempted the organization of the "Union" outside the political groups, and succeeded in bringing together, in a few weeks, about two million adherents. But it is a difficult task to maneuver between Scylla and Charybdis—between your own conscience and the wrath of the invader. The leaders could not lay out a straightforward policy and for this reason many left the Union as soon as they had entered it, disappointed and distrustful, not about the true national intention of the leaders, but about their political wisdom.

Catholic, Protestant and liberal newspapers had the courage to warn against it: "Nobody has a right to change the Constitution of this country without the cooperation of the legal Government: the Queen and her Ministers." Fighting took place in the streets of Amsterdam and the Hague between Unionists and Nazis.

Among the protests, issued against the policy of the Union, I want to call attention to a brochure, published by Dr. J. Eykman, in August. A wonderful courage was demonstrated by this man in editing a protest, in which he denounced, piece by piece, the Hitlerian policy. He also scored the persecution of Jews as un-Christian and excoriated the traitors in Holland and rejected, unconditionally, their cooperation in national reconstruction:

How many are in Holland, who now do not dare to express their opinions candidly? Soon, when all difficulties will be over, they will shout loudest of



all. . . . They want to be shrewd and hope to mislead their opponents, but such pharisaism is not shrewd enough for that.

Compatriots, do not deny today what has always been dear to you! Do not try to evade the difficulties of the present situation!

It is forbidden to speak about Independence and the House of Orange. But if we keep silent, this silence must never mean a denial of those things, which for every Netherlander are worth more than his own life. . . .

If we do not compromise, if we are willing to suffer for our faith, we will find the path to the heart of our people. There are in Holland more than seven thousand who do not want to bow before Baal.

And behind those seven thousand and more, stand millions who are united today in one common creed.

This union needs no demonstrations. One demonstration is made by them each week, every Sunday morning, when they go to church. . . .

Need I tell you, that this man is in a concentration camp now?

#### PARTY STRIFE HAMPERS UNION

One of the most curious facts of the political situation is, however, that the treacherous Nazi-group of Mussert is threatened from another side. There exists in Holland a second totalitarian movement, based more on the Fascist model: the Black Front. Its leader, Arnold Meyer, is by religion an ardent Catholic and this accounts for the fact that his program is not in the least objectionable from a religious point of view. He had found most of his adherents in the Catholic southern provinces. Moreover, his nationalism is above suspicion so that no treasonous actions from his group were reported.

The inclination to divide on religious issues is so deep in the blood of the Dutch, that they cannot keep from splitting into groups, even now, when absolute unity is so necessary if the totalitarians are to take advantage of the chances for success offered by the German occupation. So we have in Holland a Catholic Fascism and a religiously-indifferent Nazi movement!

Until now the Germans have not interfered with this question and have not objected to the Fascists, as far as we know. But should the occupation continue for a long time, there is little chance for Arnold Meyer to escape his doom. Mussert does not want any rivals and as he himself has no ability to cope with the situation, he will at once call for help from the Gestapo.

Among those three groups—Unionist, Fascist and National Socialist, the struggle is now going on for mastery in Holland, a mastery to last as long as the foreign occupation and not a second longer. The most numerous group—the Unionist—is clearly in the most disadvantageous position.

#### GERMANY CRACKS DOWN

But the Germans have not the patience to wait till the Dutch have settled these quarrels. Moreover they feel sure that the people of Holland will by all means turn against them. So they have changed their policy of conciliation to one of clear oppression. The control over the Governmental departments was taken out of the hands of the Dutch

officials and given to four German administrators. Many Netherlanders were put in prison or concentration camps under the pretext that the Dutch East-Indian Government did the same to Germans. This excuse, however, was not sufficient to explain the arrest of the former Commander-in-Chief of the Dutch Army, General Winkelman, and of the Mayors of Amsterdam and the Hague. Those men were accused of fomenting resistance against the German authorities.

With this turn in the Germany policy, the discrimination against the Jews began. About 160,000 of them live in Holland—in Amsterdam alone, 80,000. In September, all Jews had to quit the newspaper-offices, the government bureaus and the schools. The fate of German-Jewish refugees, who had been living for a time in Holland, was worse. Many of them were taken away and their deaths reported to their families a few days later.

As Jewish and politically-suspect professors had to leave the universities, the students rose in demonstrations. The closing of the Universities of Utrecht and Leyden and of the technical school of Delft, was the consequence. At the Catholic University of Nymegen, the chief librarian was ousted from his post. Several professors there were arrested, but afterward released. Some Protestant theologians of the Seminary of Kampen are still in prison.

Holland's best comic actor, Buziau, shared the same fate. He had had the "impertinence" to appear on the stage with an enormous hat and to tell the public that he had bought a hat of too large a size: "It won't fit me, the measure is six and a quarter (in Dutch *zes-en-n-kwart*, resembling in sound Seyss-Inquart) but don't think I am going to stay under it." Disappearing for a moment, he came back with an exactly fitting orange-colored hat: "That suits me!" Thundering applause and a visit of the Gestapo were his recompense.

A special German tribunal was installed at the Hague to judge all cases concerning disdain of German authority and especially sacrilegious talk about Mr. Hitler.

#### NO STARVATION—YET

How about the food situation and economic life in occupied Holland? When the Germans invaded the country, there were large reserves of food and other necessities. Of course a great quantity was requisitioned by the German army for immediate use. Hundreds of trucks left every day for Northern France, as long as the fighting went on. Still there remained enough to feed the Dutch civilians for a long time.

Though the restrictions for the Dutch are now very severe, the German soldiers are allowed to buy any quantity they want. Not only food, but also clothes, shoes and, of course, tobacco are rationed. About three-quarters of the supply of tobacco that was in Holland on May 15, was exported under new "trade-regulations" to Germany.

There is no reason to believe that the Dutch population is actually starving at present. There is certainly more food available in Holland than in

Italy, for instance, but this may change at any moment. There is no doubt that Hitler will take any quantity he thinks necessary from the occupied territories in order to keep his own grumbling people quiet. Once the reserves are exhausted, Holland will have to live on the products of Germany and how will it be then? The German authorities are said to have ordered the complete uprooting of the bulbfields, in order to have more land available for wheat growing, but this destruction of centuries of extensive cultivation cannot be of much help.

The coal situation is worse. Holland produces coal enough to satisfy her own needs but the amount allotted now to each householder is only a quarter as much as he used in former times. Winters are long and chill in Holland and heating is often necessary until June, so there will be extreme misery for all the people during the coming cold months.

According to letters from our country, industry seems to be booming. Some Jewish manufacturers were cut off from all supply of raw materials. Others will run up against the same difficulty because of the British blockade. But the public is buying all it can pay for. Nobody wants to save his money, as in a few months it will probably be worthless.

There is plenty of work in most industries because of the reconstruction of ruined cities, especially Rotterdam. Naturally a number of plants had to fall in line with German war-production. Unemployment will soon be a thing of the past in Holland. Those who don't find work are simply transferred to Germany to replace the men in German factories who are needed for military service. You see, the most difficult social questions are resolved by Nazism in a moment!

No matter how severe the restrictions may become or how uncomfortable life may be under foreign domination, the Dutch are more determined than ever to maintain their spiritual independence as the best safeguard for a future political revival. There are fewer traitors among the people than we were made to believe a few months ago, and there are very few among the thinking and intellectual part of the population. Some professors and artists, who in their own minds were not sufficiently esteemed by the Government and the public six months ago, may try to become famous with the help of the foreigner, but their fame will be the same as that of the old Greek, Eratosthenes, who set on fire the temple of his own city so that his name alone should be mentioned for ever in history. His success was complete. His name is remembered—but in detestation.

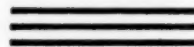
The Dutch put up a stubborn fight in the field when the invading army attacked their country. Stubbornly they are refusing to submit to either flattery or menace. They are not allowed to sing their national hymn, but its lines are engraved in their hearts:

*Mijn schildt ende betrouwen,  
Zijt Ghij O Godt, mijn Heer,*

My shield, My Faith art Thou, My Lord, My God!

## A FEW PROBLEMS IN THE PACIFIC

JOHN C. LeCLAIR



IT is of extreme interest to note that we are being psychologically readied for participation in the British objectives in the Pacific.

In recent weeks, particularly, very few news reports have failed to carry some item as to fleet movements and other activities in that area. There are rumors as to our sending, or preparing to send, a suitable number of naval units to one or more appropriate bases in the Pacific for protection of the Philippines, Indo-China and the Dutch East Indies. There are also reports, wishful perhaps, as to the awakening realization of the American people to the necessity of cooperating with Great Britain in keeping open the sea-lanes between the British dominions in the Far East and Suez.

Despite the prominence given to this situation at the moment, it is not a matter of recent decision on our part. As far back as 1938, and therefore long before the inception of the present conflict, many circumstances which, separately considered, possessed no particular significance, yet together fitted into a definite diplomatic pattern, indicated close participation between the United States and Great Britain in the Pacific. Of a piece with this were reports in that year to the effect that Singapore facilities had been offered to this country, together with repeated announcements that understandings had been concluded between this country, Great Britain, France and the Netherlands. These contemplated the availability of both Singapore and Soerbaya in Java for the common use of all the signatories.

A recent report stated that the government of the Netherland Indies was enlarging the harbor works at the Soerbaya Naval Base for the accommodation of capital ships. In view of the fact that Holland's largest ships known to be based in the East Indies are reported to be two 8,350-ton cruisers, the account, if true, would appear to envisage the use of the base either by British ships, or quite possibly our own.

There are, of course, in further confirmation of our commitments in the Pacific, reports to the effect that an understanding has also been reached with Australia on defense cooperation in that area, with their and other British ships to enjoy reciprocal favors in all of the American bases on the Pacific coast.

The unfortunate aspect of the situation is that in the present welter of emotionalism, whether inspired or not, certain possibilities appear to be either overlooked or deliberately ignored. It might be well asked as to how our present commitments in the Pacific affect fundamental American interests or will affect them in the future. In other



words, what repercussions can be expected as a result of the aid now to be extended to Great Britain in the policing of the south Pacific?

Recent years, prior to the present conflict, have found us growing somewhat sceptical of the value of a too-great interest in that area. We have, for a number of motives, in the case of the Philippine Islands enacted legislation looking toward withdrawal in 1946. While it is quite possible that changing conditions in the Pacific might very justifiably postpone this action, yet what of our new commitments? Are we going to be held in the role of a Far East power, in spite of our desire to withdraw from that area?

Therefore, if only as a matter of academic interest, it might be of value to consider various possibilities implicit in our present actions, if rumors regarding our policy in the Pacific later assume reality. At the moment we have a one-ocean navy which, as a result of general understandings with various Spanish American countries, will be expected to patrol the greater part of the shorelines to the south, in addition to our own, if the necessity should develop. If diverted in part for patrol duty in the south Pacific, it will obviously be at a disadvantage in its operations elsewhere. Yet if we contemplate a definite policy of action in the Pacific, such must be done. It is true of course that defense plans involve a future two-ocean navy, with the addition of considerable tonnage. But that is not a matter of immediate possibility; on the contrary, it requires construction during the next several years. In the interim, the conflict in Europe goes on, and the jingoistic press in all countries moves from challenge to alarm, with this country daily coming closer to the war and a situation fraught with peril.

Furthermore, there is this which must also be considered. What are the responsibilities entailed by our present participation in any south Pacific conflict insofar as the council tables of a future post-war period are concerned? This is a tricky world, with the enemies of today for reasons of expediency becoming the bedfellows of tomorrow. No matter what one's sentiments in the matter, consideration must be given to the exigencies of the unpredictable future. Yet that is the very point that is ignored in the present welter of not very far-sighted emotionalism.

Western control of the lands of the south Pacific—Philippines, Dutch East Indies, Indo-China, India—represents in general the gleanings of eighteenth and nineteenth century imperialism. They are golcondas inhabited by peoples whose interests obviously are not ours and who, whether they appear to bear the yoke willingly or not, are in the status of inferiors to our superior Occidental civilization of steel and force. All justifying arguments to the contrary cannot alter the fact that the British, French, Hollanders and ourselves to a minor extent, have used these lands with self-interest, primary and dominant.

However, that is not the issue fundamentally. The real, challenging question is the future of the south Pacific in terms of basic American interests.

At this writing, two of the owners of these lands have been subjugated by the Axis powers. If the Axis wins a complete victory, these Pacific islands are doomed to become the spoils of the victor. In the event that we now commit ourselves to their defense, will it be possible for us to withdraw, leaving them to their new masters? Or, on the other hand, will the circumstances of the situation force us to attempt to free them from their fate and become embroiled in a serious war, apart from the necessities of national defense?

On the other hand, if the Axis powers are decisively beaten, is there any guarantee that the former ownership of these areas will be restored, or better, will be capable of restoration? In this respect it must not be overlooked that Holland's continued ownership of the Netherlands Indies, for example, during the past century or more, has been the result of the mutual distrust and jealousy of the powers who prevented anyone's acquiring them. Therefore, in the event that they are not returned, will we, contrary to past practice, undertake to co-operate in their administration, placing us squarely in the middle of Pacific power politics with all the dangerous possibilities involved?

Again, let us assume that the present European conflict results in a stalemate and at the peace table these Pacific possessions are assigned, as the result of a compromise, to one or another of the Axis powers. Further, that the French or Netherlands authorities refuse to have their respective territories allocated in this fashion. Will we inject ourselves into the situation and deny the right of the agreeing nations to make such an arrangement, particularly if the people of these conquered areas, on the basis of previous successful appeals to our idealism, request that we protect them against powerful aggressors?

Finally, if, in the course of the ensuing conflict in the Pacific, due to motivating influences originating elsewhere, or merely out of the realization on the part of the native peoples of these areas of their master's weakness, an uprising against occidental rule should arise, what then? We could of course stand aside and allow them to work out their own destinies. Unquestionably, however, in the heat of conflict it would be comparatively simple to convince ourselves that we owed it to the European masters of these areas, or to the native people themselves, obviously deluded by propagandists, to put down these revolts.

These are some of the dangers implicit in the situation of American participation in Pacific power-politics at the present time. The glib patter so prevalent at the moment disdains to consider them or superficially fails to take them into account through ignorance of the long-range possibilities of the situation. But they are present nevertheless. The world has changed considerably since the last war. Involving ourselves in the Pacific at the present time will set in motion a chain of circumstances from which we will find it impossible to withdraw. It is a situation fraught with extreme peril and can ultimately bring the interests of this country into jeopardy.

# CATHOLIC ACTION APPLIED TO THOSE WHO CANNOT SEE

JOHN J. CONNOLLY

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THERE is only one positive and complete solution of the problems of blindness. That is the one which God alone can give—the gift of sight. Since, in God's wisdom, this gift is granted to the few, there will always be the many who must courageously walk along the road of darkness. Workers for the blind generally agree that no adequate census of the blind has ever been taken in this country and that under present conditions none is possible. Estimates as to the number of blind people in the United States therefore vary greatly. Basing an estimate on our experience of four years' work with the blind, we hazard the figure of forty thousand as being the number of blind Catholics in the United States. Here is a world of darkness—a Catholic world of people who are blind. The problems of the seeing world are discouraging at times, but here we have all these problems multiplied and made more complicated by blindness, particularly the blindness of a seeing world that frequently sees only sightlessness but fails to see the man or woman who is sightless. The problems of blindness are not new, but they are today greatly increased. The speed of modern living, the gravitation to the city, the breakdown of the family life, mass production, materialistic philosophy, economic insecurity, all have made more difficult the problems of the blind.

But what of the Church and the blind in the United States? I have never seen any survey of Catholic work for the blind in our country. To the best of my knowledge, no such survey has ever been made, although it would prove very helpful.

Of the more than fifty schools for the blind in the United States, only three are Catholic. Of institutions for the adult blind, I personally know of only three under Catholic auspices. The work of transcribing Catholic literature into braille by machine presses has, until very recently, been confined to two presses.

Institutions alone cannot solve all the problems of the blind, as only a small number of them are resident in institutions. There remains a vast number who must look to individuals or local organizations for a solution of their problems. Many such there are in the United States. To mention only a few: there are the Sodalties of the Blessed Virgin, the Legion of Mary, the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Among the organizations interested in the transcribing of braille we may mention the monumental work accomplished by the Xavier Free Publication Society, the International Federation of Cath-

olic Alumnae, the Kenwood Braille Press, the Mercy Braille Clubs, and many others.

In the Archdiocese of Boston much excellent work has been done for the blind by individuals and organizations for many years. In 1928, a group of devoted women, known as St. Raphael's Guild, banded themselves together to inaugurate a retreat movement for blind women and girls under the direction of the Religious of the Cenacle at Brighton, Massachusetts.

Four years ago His Eminence, William Cardinal O'Connell, the Archbishop of Boston, observing the excellent work which had been done, decided the time opportune to organize, coordinate and expand the service to the sightless under diocesan auspices. Therefore, His Eminence, in 1936 founded The Catholic Guild for the Blind, "an Organization founded for the spiritual and material welfare of the blind of the Archdiocese of Boston."

The story of this work for the blind in the Archdiocese of Boston will give a fair idea of the possibilities of a program for Catholic Action for the benefit of the blind throughout the country. It is truly Catholic Action when we see the great amount of volunteer service performed under the direction of the Church—"the participation of the laity in the work of the apostolate under the supervision of the Hierarchy."

The focal point of the whole program is the retreat work for the blind. Retreats are held regularly for four separate groups of blind people: boys, girls, men and women, at the various retreat houses throughout the Diocese. Essential to all these retreats are the services of groups of volunteer workers who drive the blind to and from the retreat houses and act as guides during the time of retreat. The retreat program itself is not essentially different from the retreat for a sighted group.

Special value of these retreats lies in the fact that so many of the blind are restricted in their contacts with the Church. Their handicap keeps many of them from attending church services regularly and often deprives them of an opportunity to read Catholic literature.

These two difficulties have led to other activities of the Guild. To enable the blind to attend Sunday Mass and other church services, the Guild early formed a volunteer guide-service and now, with the assistance of these guides, many of the blind who have not been to church for years go every Sunday and some of them every day of the week.



The Guild has also striven to make available an increased supply of Catholic literature in braille. Transcribing into braille may be done by one of two methods, either by hand or by machine press. Both of these methods have been used by the Guild.

Hand transcription is efficient only when a small number of copies of a work is desired. Volunteer transcribers have put single copies of many works into braille by this method. A braille project of the Works Projects Administration has transcribed numerous other works of Catholic interest. At the present time, two braille projects in the vicinity of Boston are devoting part of their time to the brail-ling of textbooks for our students at Catholic colleges.

Transcription by machine press is the method to be followed when a number of copies of the same work is desired. The Guild's first venture into this field was in the brail-ling of Rev. Hilary Weger's *Studies in Religion*, a textbook for adult discussion clubs and for Catholic students in public high schools. This text, covering a three-year course, was begun a year ago. The first volume of this series was used in our religious education work last term. As this is written, McNeill's brochure on *The Sacramentals* has just been adapted for use as a textbook for blind high-school students.

The most noteworthy advance in the field of Catholic literature in braille to be made in recent years has been the transcription of the *Catholic Digest*. The first braille copy of the *Digest* appeared in September of this year. Credit for this must go to the understanding and far-seeing editors of the *Catholic Digest*. The Catholic Guild for the Blind, however, is proud of its share in this new work, having acted as intermediary for the *Digest* in all of the arrangements for the brail-ling. Catholic education is a most important part of the work of the Guild. In 1939, Perkins Institution, which is the Massachusetts State School for the Blind, located in Watertown, Massachusetts, decided to give more time to religious and cultural subjects in the curriculum. The new program permits the students to receive religious instructions during school hours by representatives of the several religious denominations found in the student body. His Eminence, the Cardinal, appointed The Catholic Guild for the Blind to the work of teaching the Catholic children of the School.

Since that time the Assistant Director of the Guild, together with eleven of the Diocesan Sisters of St. Joseph, who are proficient readers of braille, have been teaching at the School each week. The Catholic children enrolled are in every grade from kindergarten through advanced high-school. Our teachers there have made a study of methods of teaching the blind and are putting these methods into practice in the teaching of religion. The problem of teaching the Mass has required a great deal of attention. All that appeals to the sense of sight in the Mass is, of course, lost to the blind.

Nor can any help be derived from the teaching of the Mass by the prayers of the Mass, since no missal is available in braille. A complete missal in braille would be so bulky as to be entirely out of

the question. Even the smallest prayer book for children is an unwieldy volume when brailled.

Some picture of what is taking place at the altar is desirable, though not the detailed explanation given to sighted children. In order that this picture may be available, a miniature altar with scaled size models of the vessels used at Mass was obtained from the Catechetical Guild and miniature vestments have been made by interested women. These are sufficient to give a picture of the Mass.

This briefly covers the spiritual program of service to the blind, but Holy Mother Church realizes that man is a composite being made up of body and soul. In the spirit of the Church the Guild seeks to serve the whole man, body and soul.

The guide service mentioned above is not restricted merely to those desirous of attending religious service. No, there are many other places, like the sighted, that the blind wish to go. Supplementing the work of the guides is a motor corps. Volunteer drivers give of their time to take the blind for rides. Other volunteers serve as visitors. This service is particularly for those who live alone or who have few if any callers, for whom dark day follows dark night in unbroken sequence, and long indeed are the lonely hours. In such cases, the Guild introduces to the blind person a sighted individual who has volunteered to share his time and friendship.

Next there is the reader service. This is an invaluable form of Catholic Action. Necessarily, Catholic braille literature is limited, but the reader who gives his services to the blind makes available the latest in worth while Catholic literature. The assistance of readers is especially valuable to students. This form of Catholic Action makes use of volunteers to assist students at the school for the blind and also blind students who are attending college and graduate schools.

Since the blind are just the same as we are, they enjoy the things which we enjoy. Hence, a recreational program. In the summer there are outings to the country and to the seashore practically every week and the program of the day is complete from weenie-roasts to swimming. Theatre parties are arranged and these are real treats. A young woman was once asked by a seeing friend just what pleasure she derived from the talking pictures. She explained that she derived the same pleasure as we do from listening to a drama on the radio.

Then there are those memorable days at the ball game—believe it or not. Among the most loyal and expert fans we must include great numbers of the blind. Each year the Guild makes arrangements with the Boston National Baseball Club to take the blind to the game. At one of these games recently there were one hundred blind persons in attendance, women as well as men. To avoid accident, the blind were placed behind a screen at the catcher's box. One of the coaches was delegated to give a play-by-play description and he in turn was aided by the broadcast of the game received through two portable radios placed on either side of the group.

All that has been said thus far has not taken into consideration the financial needs of the blind. This is an important phase of the work of the Guild.

Among the blind, as among any group of handicapped people, you will find many who will need financial assistance. The Guild's work is to seek out the proper agencies of relief and also to give supplementary budget assistance. The Guild is also interested in the higher education of the talented blind. This year scholarships for the blind were secured from Holy Cross College, the University of Notre Dame, Boston College, Regis College and the New England Conservatory of Music. At each of these five institutions there is one blind student in attendance, fully capable of meeting the sighted students in scholarly competition. It is our hope that they may bring honor to themselves and through their success, open the door of opportunity to others.

The employment service of the Guild seeks to find places for the blind in industry. This is one of the surest ways of bringing happiness to the blind, as to the sighted—to provide an opportunity for them to give expression to the talents which they possess. What can they do? In the business world the blind may act as sales managers, advertising managers, public-relations counsels, typists and ediphone operators, stenographers, switchboard operators, insurance brokers, executives of all kinds. A proof of the ability of blind stenographers can be found in the work of the blind stenographer employed in the Guild office.

In the professional world there are successful lawyers, psychologists, osteopaths, social workers, teachers, professors, lecturers and librarians. There have also been even a few outstanding statesmen. In the industrial world there are the familiar occupations of the blind: chair caning, basket weaving, mat making, broom making, and piano tuning in which the blind are second to none. In any group of the blind there are those who have always been without their sight and those who have been blinded. The problems of these groups are slightly different. For one it is adjustment; for the other readjustment, the remaking of their lives to conform with the world of darkness.

The greatest of the problems of the blind is not so much sightlessness as the blindness of a seeing world which cannot understand how a person even after years of training can be greater for a handicap. Most of the people in the world think of the blind as different from themselves. They fail to understand the blind and, consequently, do not realize the help that is needed.

This lack of understanding on the part of the sighted is a fundamental problem of blindness and, until the world accepts the blind as normal human beings, we can never hope to understand nor solve the problems of the blind. We shall understand the blind only when we know them.

# THAT ALL MAY BE ONE IN THE MYSTICAL BODY

BEATRICE B. BROWN



BEFORE the last war, the comforting illusion was generally held that the world was getting better, that it was, in fact, better than at any time in the past, and especially, better than during the Middle Ages. To cynics who questioned this theory, its adherents replied by pointing out triumphantly that criminals were no longer publicly executed; anesthetics relieved pain; education was universal and compulsory; and, above all, religious persecution (that is, the persecution of Protestants by Catholics) was no longer possible in the enlightened times.

These and similar arguments were advanced to prove that we were indeed fortunate to have been spared the ignorance, cruelty and bigotry of the twelfth century and to enjoy the comfort, security and freedom of the twentieth. A textbook of European history published in 1913 predicted the end of war as a result of the Hague conferences; the spread of international good will through increased

use of the airplane; the abolition of disease through advances in science, and of poverty through governmental legislation.

These naive conclusions of the intellectuals of that day wring from us now wry laughter. Their Utopia has ended in a shambles. True, criminals are no longer executed in our public squares. Instead, people convicted of no crime—men, women, children, the sick and old, teachers, shopkeepers, housewives, those engaged in peaceful and profitable pursuits—are slaughtered indiscriminately in these wars which the Third Hague Conference (according to the authority mentioned) was to have ended by its approaching deliberations, scheduled for 1915. The bombing plane does not choose its victims according to age, sex, or occupation; all stand an equal chance of being burned or buried alive, or blown to pieces, by this machine which, according to the same authority, was to prove an instrument of international understanding and



good will. In this world, grown tolerant and kindly and enlightened, no one today is safe. All alike face the threat of public execution, of death fully as horrible as any reserved for criminals in those days of ignorance and superstition, happily so far behind us.

The tragedy derives a double irony from the fact that it is avoidable. In spite of their bewilderment, people are aware that something can and should be done to stop it. There is no end of frantic quests for reasons and remedies. These are sought in politics, economics, education—everywhere but in that field where the definite source of the evil is to be found.

The failure of compulsory education to remake humanity; imperialistic rivalry resulting from the rise of absolute states; economic insecurity due to the capitalistic system: these are chiefly blamed for the disasters of our day. They are, however, not the causes, but the results, of an ill. They are themselves the fruits of a greater evil than any they have produced—the greatest, in fact, that has overtaken humanity since the fall of man. This disaster was the Protestant revolution of the sixteenth century, which, in “emancipating” men from the spiritual authority of the Catholic Church, left them free to visit on themselves and the world disasters resulting from the religious, political and economic fallacies which that revolution brought forth. In a society acknowledging the authority of the Church, and regulating the lives of its members according to the teaching of that authority, the wholesale destruction now being visited on the world would not be possible. In the spiritual and intellectual soil of such a society, the ideas responsible for that destruction could not take root and flourish.

For this evil there is one cure: to undo the work of the Protestant revolt. To bring back to the Church of Christ those peoples lost to her by that revolt, is the task which must engage our efforts and attention if we are to save what can still be saved from the ruin. All tasks are of slight importance, all needs insignificant, beside this.

A few Catholic thinkers have long been awake to the urgency of this need, but the great majority of our laity have been unaware of it or indifferent to it, to our very great hurt. And those who have recognized it have been at a loss for any definitive plan for the accomplishment of this work. Books, radio programs, periodicals, we have in plenty, for the dissemination of argument and apologetic; and still the nations, quite literally in their death agony, will not turn to the Physician Who can still give them life.

The blow struck by Luther was aimed, not at the historical person of Christ, but at His Mystical Body which is the Church. That blow inflicted on the Mystical Body a wound which has not yet been healed. Healing has been delayed because we, the members of that Body, have failed to recognize the serious nature of the hurt and to use the only means by which it may be cured.

The Protestant heresy teaches that men can separate themselves from the Body of Christ and still

remain Christians. To support this contention, it is necessary to deny the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and to affirm belief in the historical Christ as sufficient for salvation. This heresy is, therefore, a grievous affront to the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity in that form in which He has chosen to perpetuate His Presence among us. In this it resembles the affront offered by Adam to God the Father. And as the disobedience of Adam plunged the whole race into disaster, so the defiance of Luther has involved the world in a spiritual catastrophe from whose direct results all of us, Catholics as well as Protestants, suffer today and will suffer tomorrow.

The loss inflicted on the world by the Protestant heresy is incalculable. The chief victims of the tragedy are its own adherents, whom the sin of Luther has deprived of those twin sources of spiritual riches and grace: Mass and the Sacraments. This loss is comparable to the loss of Paradise suffered by the human race in the sin of Adam; and it cannot be repaired except by means similar to those used by Divine Love and Wisdom to repair the first.

Nor can we delay any longer: the danger which threatens us—which has indeed overtaken us—is too great. It is not now a question of saving our souls only, but our lives also: we must sacrifice, or be sacrificed. We must win back to the Church those nations lost to her by the sin of Luther, or we shall all alike perish. There can be no peace or safety for the world, until this reunion is achieved. In this work we can use no other weapon than that which Our Lord Himself used to undo the work of Adam and open to us again the gates of Heaven. By sacrifice this can be done, and not otherwise.

The greatest and most acceptable sacrifice we can offer to God for this end is that of His Divine Son: the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Let us go to Mass frequently, daily, if possible, offering the Holy Sacrifice in union with Christ, in order that the sin of Protestantism may be repaired, and those separated from the Church by that sin may return to her. Let us pray often and ardently for peace, but for peace under the only circumstances which can make it permanent or even possible: for peace achieved through the reunion of the Christian world in the Church of Christ. Let us also unite with the sufferings of the Divine Victim of Calvary whatever trials and disappointments we are called on to endure; and let us make also some voluntary offering, some deliberate personal sacrifice, for this end.

To reconquer for the Church her lost nations is to restore the world to Christ and to peace. This must be done, and at once, if anything is to be saved from the shambles. It can be done not by the victory of one side or the other, not even by conferences and discussions and treaties. It can be done only by Christians living the life of Christ—that is, a life of sacrifice—actively, consciously, fully; by members of the Mystical Body of Christ united in a Crusade of Sacrifice for the purpose of healing the divisions within that Body, and determined that this Crusade shall not stop short of accomplishing its end.

## ALMOST TRUE

VERY touching is the picture of the State Department, recently unveiled to the public by the Under-Secretary of State, Mr. Sumner Welles. It shows a group of seasoned diplomats, so completely united that, as was recommended by the Apostle, they have but one mind and one heart.

Now it is very well to be reassured that the Secretary and his Under-Secretary do not square off, in the manner approved for the ring, when they chance to meet. We scarcely need to be told that they never lie in wait for each other, armed to the teeth, ready to dart from some dark corner in the offices of the Department, and inflict a lethal wound. Nor have we ever been inclined to attribute to Mr. James Clement Dunn, the Department's adviser on European affairs, a thorny and pugnacious disposition. If there are lions in the Department, and also some lambs, we are quite sure that, at moments when the millstones of the Department cease to grind, they lie down in peace and amity.

Yet these saccharine reports which the Under-Secretary has released to the press, give us much the same feeling of unease which we experienced years ago, after raiding the jam-closet, and topping off the banquet with a pound or two of chocolate-drops. Mr. Welles deposes that it would "seem to be humanly impossible for two people over a period of eight years to agree more consistently and thoroughly than Mr. Hull and I have done." It seems humanly impossible to us, as well. But putting aside the theory, suggested indeed by Mr. Welles, that both gentlemen have been in receipt of unusual assistance from on high, we can only rejoice in the knowledge that the State Department is the cleft in the rock loved by the dove of peace.

Still, we are loath to give up our ingrained distrust of all diplomats. We picture the typical diplomat as a gentleman, distinguished by a tall hat and frock coat, who habitually employs language to conceal his thought. That is the picture (omitting the hat and the coat) which Talleyrand made popular a century and a half ago, and our acceptance of it may only prove our inability to get out of the horse-and-buggy age. But it must be remembered that Talleyrand achieved one of his most striking victories not exactly by telling the truth, but by telling almost the whole truth, and nothing else.

The trouble with most of us Americans is that we expect the Government, and all its departments, to let us know at every moment what makes the wheels go round. The Government has never unbosomed itself in this manner, but we keep on hoping, and also keep in our habit of discounting every bit of information which the Government grudgingly shares with us. Just what Woodrow Wilson meant when he said we ought to demand "open covenants, openly arrived at," is still uncertain. At any rate, we have never had them. That is why it is wise to make reservations when the Government, particularly in war-time, begins to issue bulletins. They may be, some of them, almost true.

## EDITO

### WE ASK

IN 1917, unoffending citizens were brutally mobbed, often with police connivance, because of rumors that they were "pro-German." Mobs will form again unless we check the first signs of hysteria, no matter in whom observed. May not Senator Wheeler speak of peace, or ex-Secretary Woodring criticize the Administration, without being accused of constructive treason? Is an American's loyalty to the United States to be measured solely by his devotion to Great Britain? With what heart or consistency can we begin a war to save democracies abroad by destroying constitutional rights at home?

### OLIVE BRANCH OR

CONGRESS under the Constitution is a branch of the Federal Government, with well defined powers and duties. But what Congress can be when it becomes little more than a well-trained majority of 531 citizens, no one knows. In future, its function may be confined to the work of making investigations, and filing reports. In that sense, the report of the Smith Committee, which has been investigating the National Labor Relations Board, is of interest and, possibly, of some importance.

As anticipated, this report, signed by three of the Committee's five members, is a sweeping indictment of the Board, its personnel, and a number of its rulings. The Committee reports that it has "overwhelming evidence" to show that the main charges which have been made against the Board can be traced to the radical tendencies and "the entire absence of judicial temperament" of at least one member of the Board, and of many of the Board's employees. Many of these were selected not on the basis of professional standing and ability to work "in a fair and impartial manner," but on the ground that their "Leftist inclinations" fitted them admirably for the Board's purposes.

As a result, evils without number have been noted. Litigants before the Board have been blacklisted, employers and associations have been denied the right to testify in cases involving them, and sometimes hazarding their very existence, industry has been obliged to pay back wages to persons never on the payrolls, and in some cases to persons who had never even ap-



## COSTLY UNIONS

LAST month a labor "leader" admitted before a Congressional committee that applicants were often charged an initiation fee of \$300.00. Thereafter, the workers paid \$7.50 every month as dues, and any special assessments that might be made. This money, said the collector, was used for such administrative purposes as the employment of business agents, financial secretaries, and bookkeepers, and for the incidental expenses of the local. Some of these expenditures were, no doubt, legitimate; perhaps all of them were. But cannot labor devise a less expensive form of union?

## H OR MACHINE GUN?

plied for employment, and attempts have been made to justify "sit-down" strikes and other disorders, "even when rebuked by the Supreme Court of the United States," and in defiance of the will of Congress. Finally, the Board has consistently acted upon an interpretation of the meaning and extent of inter-State commerce which practically destroys the rights of the States.

As far as observation and information can serve us, the charges brought by the Committee are amply justified. But some reservations are necessary. While it is true that Communists and fellow-travelers have exercised an undue influence on the Board, it must be remembered that Congress flung the door wide to these trouble-makers by approving the Wagner Act, and stubbornly refusing to amend it, when its potentialities for evil began to develop. The real source of the troubles which have followed the Act, supposed to conciliate labor and employers by removing causes of discord, is Congress, rather than the Communists.

Whether Congress can summon up the courage to amend the Wagner Act, is wholly a matter for speculation. The appointment of Messrs. Leiserson and Millis to the Board does no more than mitigate the evils of which the Committee complains. These scandalous disorders, often involving a substantial denial of justice, can be removed only when the Act has been so amended as to compel the Board to respect rights wherever these are found, even should they belong to an employer.

## WE GO TO WAR

THE radio address of the President on the night of December 29 can be summed up very briefly. We must make immediate use of our every resource in materials, money and men, to aid Great Britain.

The President could not have used stronger language, both in denouncing the Nazi Government as the enemy of civilization, and in calling upon the American people to make every sacrifice to destroy that Government, had Congress declared that a state of war existed. To Mr. Roosevelt, Germany is the "enemy," since "the Nazi masters of Germany have made it clear that they intend not only to dominate all life and thought in their own country, but also to enslave the whole of Europe, and then to use the resources of Europe to dominate the rest of the world." Hitler's statement, made a few weeks ago, "I can beat any other power in the world," is taken to mean that "there can be no ultimate peace between their philosophy of government and our philosophy of government."

Discussing this "undeniable threat," the President asserted that we are nearer German aggression than many think. Could we rest easy, he asked, should the Axis Powers, after defeating Great Britain, become our neighbors in this hemisphere? In that event, "all of us in the Americas would be living at the point of a gun—a gun loaded with explosive bullets, economic as well as military. We should then enter upon a new and terrible era in which the whole world, our own hemisphere included, would be run by brute force." It would not be extremely difficult for the Nazi Government to invade South American countries, or even the United States. "Today we have planes which could fly from the British Isles to New England and back without refueling, and the range of the modern bomber is ever being increased."

Any suggestion of a policy even approaching "appeasement" is rejected by the President as ridiculous. Were this country to endeavor to reach a negotiated peace with the Nazi Government, we should share the fate that has befallen every country which put faith in a Nazi promise. Here the President is on sure ground, far removed from the field of inference. We may not share the President's conviction that the Nazi Government is a combination of "pelf and power," but there is extremely good reason to believe that its principles can only "dominate and enslave the human race." Against this alliance, however it may be described, "the British people are conducting an active war. . . . Our own future security is greatly dependent on the outcome of that fight. Our ability to keep out of war is going to be affected by that outcome."

Here we find what Mr. Roosevelt himself might call "the nub" of his address. Germany is an enemy of civilization, which Great Britain is fighting, not only on her own account, but also on ours. Should Great Britain be defeated, war, with all its horrors, would be ours. We can escape them by aiding Great Britain. Granted this contention, the President logically demands that we immediately supply the Brit-

ish with the implements of war, planes, tanks, artillery, freighters and food, to enable them "to fight for their liberty and our security. Emphatically, we must get these weapons to them in sufficient volume, and quickly enough, so that we and our children will be saved the agony and suffering of war which others have had to endure."

Even the most determined critic of the President must admit that it is perfectly clear what the President thinks this country should do, and what, as far as his interest is controlling, it is going to be obliged to do. The part of the United States in this war is not to send men abroad, a project, said the President, which this Government has no idea of adopting, but to be "the great arsenal of democracy." Since the British Government is fighting our battles as well as its own, it may reasonably demand that we supply the munitions of war.

After outlining what industry, labor and every citizen must do in what is termed "an emergency as serious as war itself," the President definitely commits this country to a policy which the Nazi Government must regard as the first of a series of hostile acts. "We have furnished the British great material support," said the President, "and we will furnish far more in the future."

What the President says in denunciation of Nazi principles is, of course, perfectly true. But it would also be true, if directed against the Soviet Government. Communism, indeed, strikes even more directly than Nazism at the foundation of the American plan of government. Is it to be our future mission to destroy by force of arms, all political philosophies alien to our own?

Despite the President's contention that the one purpose of his policy "is to keep war away from our country and our people," it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that we are now warring against Germany, and that actual participation in war cannot be long delayed, should our hostile acts be continued. We do not criticize this hostility, for we recognize much truth in the President's conclusions, even while we recognize that they are founded on inferences, and not on acts of aggression against this country by the Nazi Government. But to us it seems imperative that we clear our minds of pretense, and recognize that we cannot be at war, and not at war, at one and the same time.

Although Congress, which alone can declare war, has not yet acted, its concurrence with the President is assured by the control of that body by the Democratic party. In our judgment, we are at war, and it is folly to pretend that we are not. Pretense will block adequate defense. What is worse, it may lead the people to believe that no precautions need be taken against attacks upon constitutional government on the plea of extreme emergency. It is sadly true that every war tends to rend the fabric of government by law, and to substitute government by the will of one man, or set of men. To destroy democratic processes in this country in an effort to preserve them to other countries, will destroy them everywhere.

In the dark days to come, may Almighty God give us wisdom and fortitude.

## THE HIDDEN LIFE

SOMEWHERE the late Gilbert Keith Chesterton has written that in the New York subways folks risk their lives to fight their way into an express train, to save three minutes which they do not know what to do with. Chesterton could never get quite used to the hurly-burly of American life. Very probably he thought that the English custom of tea for all in the afternoon made life pleasanter, while taking from it nothing that was worth while, and he was right.

A less gentle critic has said, in the language of modern psychology, that American life is characterized by toxic intensity, frequently followed by frustration. He too is right. We Americans are rather proud of our energy, and apparently we do not care much what we do, provided that we are doing something. That is the philosophy of the rocking-chair which keeps going, but brings us nowhere. We do not stop to think that energy is useful, only when properly applied to attain a laudable end. Otherwise, it may be as aimless as the activity of a water-bug skating hither and yon on a little pool, or as destructive as an earthquake. It never occurs to us that it may be profitable to shut up shop now and then, and sit down quietly to think about the only things in life important enough to demand all our energy.

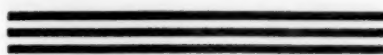
In the Gospel for tomorrow (Saint Luke, ii, 42-52) the need of these quiet hours is beautifully expressed. Undoubtedly, the first lesson to be found in this Gospel is that what God wants us to do must take precedence of every other duty, even if in following that Holy Will we cause grief to those we love. But it will be observed that, after describing how Joseph and Mary, with the Child Jesus, visited the Temple, and how He was lost, and found again only when they had sought Him for three days "sorrowing," Saint Luke sums up the longest period of Our Lord's life in the words, "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and was subject to them. . . . And Jesus advanced in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and men."

Unto this Jesus of Nazareth had been entrusted a mission, sublime in the eyes of God and of all men. Yet for the greater part of His earthly life, He hid Himself in the little town of Nazareth. Here He is a Child, obedient to Joseph, the head of the house, and to Mary; a Boy, learning a trade in the shop of His foster-father; a journeyman-carpenter, supporting His holy Mother and Himself on the meager, uncertain income of a village artisan; a young Man Whose days are filled with simple labor and with prayer. And He was God.

Well may we pause in our hurried and often hectic lives, to turn our minds and our hearts to the little house at Nazareth. He wishes to teach us to live, as God would have us live; to be contented in the lot which God has given us; to walk always in God's presence, so that our very work becomes a prayer. Before our day is spent, may we learn the sweetness and the strength of the Hidden Life of Jesus, our Lord and our Saviour, in the humble home at Nazareth.



# CORRESPONDENCE



## STIRRED

EDITOR: I had just about gotten over Sister M. Vincentine's article, *A College Girl Vote on Sermons* (AMERICA, November 9), when I was about equally stirred by another. I mean, *The Laity Begs for Spiritual Aid*, by Imelda C. Rausch (December 14).

To express directly my reaction, I feel that it is most profitable to our clergy to receive an occasional admonition of this kind concerning spiritual ministrations.

I understand that in the mind of the authors this is purely a constructive criticism, and personally I am looking forward to some more. Would that all priests read these articles; they have been to me like Retreat sermons; even more, I have the text to refer to when I wish. Of course, others like myself will say at first: "That is not for me." But in the inner soul there will be left there somewhat of a traffic sign restraining the speed of my Mass and pointing out that my future sermons are meant to strike the hearts of the faithful.

Concord, N. H.

(REV.) ACHILLE LETTRE

## PROPOSITION

EDITOR: Your Comment (December 14) says:

Concern over the moral and religious welfare of the men inducted in the increased army and navy services is becoming critical. . . . It appears that this most important phase of the new life of the new soldiers was overlooked or purposely neglected by the Government agencies and the army officials.

Did you expect anything else?

Lincoln considered this nation dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal, but it is not. It is dedicated to the proposition that religion does not count. Millions for the schools, millions for the movies, millions for the jails, but not one cent (under the Selective Service Act) for religion.

Of late we are often told that American youth will get in the army that discipline lacking in the nation's schools. And many conclude that at last we are getting somewhere.

We certainly are, but is it where we want to go? Compulsion may produce external observance, but it will never produce morale. After a few court-martials I suppose you will have good order, but is that the way to develop backbone in people who have been holding up lamp posts for ten or twenty years? You may make wooden soldiers out of them, but you will never make a hero. Once you admit external force as the only means of discipline in things great or things small, you are doomed to failure. Burke's four objections to the use of force in 1775 are still valid in 1941.

This nation has for 150 years ignored the one

formative principle in human life. That, in fact, has been its principle. Now we are testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. History is against us.

Weston, Mass.

CARL THAYER

## REVIEWS

EDITOR: I shall not wait for the man behind the counter to tell you that I bought a book because I was influenced by a book review in AMERICA, as Harold C. Gardiner suggests, *In Re Reviews* (AMERICA, December 14).

But for whatever comfort he may derive from it, I hasten to make affirmation that even when the Book-of-the-Month Club recommends a book, I am greatly influenced by the attitude of the reviewer in AMERICA.

Recently it was AMERICA that overcame the inertia of my disposition to acquire *Star Gazer*, and *Embezzled Heaven*. And for many years in the past I have chosen most of my reading in accordance with reviews in AMERICA.

I do not know what the relation is of those who write to those who appreciate, but I think the ratio is rather small, and I feel that AMERICA's reviewers may get much more comfort from the representative value of this letter, than might be derived from a merely individual statement.

St. Paul, Minn.

FRED J. TAYLOR

## QUOTES

EDITOR: As a graduate of a Catholic university, granddaughter of a veteran of the Civil War, and a former professor of higher mathematics in a leading Catholic women's college, I should like to submit the following quotations:

(1) Always the Germans have been morbid people, thinking in terms of war and death. For generations they have been specialists in the science of war. They seem to have no other genius, no way of using peace. (*Sigrid Undset*)

(2) All men of good will have set out to fight the evil spirit which has taken hold of one of the most gifted members (i.e. the German people) of the family of nations. (*Dr. Irene Marinoff*)

(3) But if war comes, we must go into it, loving God, loving our country and hating no man. (AMERICA editorial)

To the Adlerian reader, Undset's statement is harsh, uncompromising, that of Marinoff more subtle, but the last quote breathes of the spirit of Catholicism. The attitude of His Holiness and AMERICA's editorial attitude seem coincidental thus far, particular emphasis being laid on antipathy for certain members of the regime of modern Germany and not for the Germans as a nation or as a people.

San Francisco, Calif. MARY B. VON WEIMAR

# LITERATURE AND ARTS

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## NOVELS BY HAMLET WITH A CAMERA

ELIZABETH DREW

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THE novel is the literary form which brings us nearer to life as we live it than any other. It has always been closely concerned with the emotional and moral values which men live by, and has provoked discussion of such values. It is not surprising, therefore, that there is a great deal of talk and writing today about the failure of the novel of the present generation to provide stimulus and leadership to the modern world. Archibald MacLeish went so far as to declare that the "post-war" novelists "must face the fact that the books they wrote have done more to disarm democracy in the face of Fascism than any other single influence," and many other critics are engaged in pointing out that these writers were utilitarian, neurotic and unpleasantly realistic.

Such indictments challenge us to examine the literature of our age, and to test the truth of the accusations brought against it.

The arrival of crisis clarifies issues. Criticisms and rebellions which have been long maturing come into the open and are formulated into words and action. The crisis of the last war, followed by the crisis of the economic depression, stimulated a revolution in social consciousness and in the literary treatment of it, which provides the basis for the present adverse criticism. The revolt was against the codes and conventions—moral, social, emotional and economic—of the nineteenth century, and the literature was a literature of protest. It was a period of the merciless exposure of shams, not only in individual morality, but in the traditional attitudes toward religion, imperialism, high finance, war, social injustice and domestic relations. As one of the characters said in D. H. Lawrence's *Aaron's Rod*: "We'll never get anywhere till we stand up and face everything out, and break the old forms."

To "break the old forms" became the watchword of the age. Never in the whole history of literature has there been such an orgy of "de-bunking"; never has there been such a relentless frankness and outspokenness about unpleasant facts. Thackeray was a great social satirist. He saw human nature as incurably weak, silly, selfish and greedy: he laid bare with deadly precision the workings of self-interest and egotism, the love of money and the love of power, the ubiquity of human jealousy, cruelty and grab. Virtue is a very mild affair in

*Vanity Fair*. But the world of Thackeray is an earthly paradise compared with the worlds of Sinclair Lewis and Somerset Maugham, of Faulkner and Aldous Huxley, of Aldington, Hemingway and Dos Passos. These writers were followed in the early thirties by a further crop of the literature of protest in the "proletarian" novels of Farrell and Cantwell, and *Native Son* and *Grapes of Wrath* are recent illustrations of the same type of writing.

Just as these novelists explored the disintegration of the social structure and its consequences, Joyce and his followers explored the structure of the human consciousness, breaking the old forms of psychological approach into the reporting of the multiplicity and disintegration of experience in the human conscious and subconscious mind.

Now the usual attack on these writers is that their "realism" is all on one side, and that they ignore the elements on the other. It is pointed out that there has always been good and evil in the world, and that every foul and ugly aspect of experience can be matched by a beautiful and ennobling one.

This is no doubt true, but to present it as an argument against the modern novel is to ignore the character and significance of modern writing. We live in an age of transition. An old culture is dying, and no new one has yet been created to take its place. Now it is not writers who create the Time-Spirit, but the writer is the point at which the Time-Spirit becomes articulate. It is in the literary memorials which men have made of their thoughts and experiences that we discover, more than in any other evidence, the impulses which have moved and directed societies of the past. The writer reveals. By so doing, he can shake us from the torpor of habit, he can purge "the film of familiarity" from our eyes, and stir our dormant faculties. He can make us recognize the world which vaguely delights and bewilders and horrifies us, by showing it to us through a vision which is clearer, and more sensitive than our own.

This is particularly true of the novel, since it is a direct representation of society, and in any age of social decay and revolt, it is clearly on the destructive side that the novelist will use his gift of revelation. There has been plenty of feeble writing and thinking in our age, as in all ages, but no one can



claim that the novelists who have attacked the evils of the existing social structure have misinformed and misled the public as their politicians and financiers have misinformed and misled them. They have challenged the effete civilization in which such remediable evils are allowed to exist, and all the rampant jobbery and robbery and snobbery around us. They have illustrated and reflected our society only too truly. They supply a documentary indictment of our age: its conflicts, its disorder, its barbarism and its over-sophistication.

The achievement of the modern novel, then, can be said to be that it has revealed and disseminated an enormous amount of real *knowledge* about conditions of living and thinking in the world of today. It has challenged the easy acceptance of the old social integration by presenting the chaotic multiplicity of facts and experience which underlie it. There is nothing unhealthy in this: we may thank the novelists heartily for it.

But there is, I think, one legitimate criticism of fiction since the last war. Its revolt has been so far an entirely *negative* one. The social exposures remain brilliant *rapportage* of social decay; the psychological expositions remain brilliant notation of emotional revulsion. But as remarkable as the brilliance of both has been their stasis. Literature of the last twenty years has been a kind of Hamlet in a society reminiscent of the Danish court. Against the Claudius of power, the Gertrude of self-indulgence, the Polonius of political chicanery and the Laertes of irresponsible mediocrity, stands the literary artist; equipped only with his knowledge of the facts, his own supersensitive consciousness of the situation, and a permanently guilty conscience.

The failure of the modern novel illustrates, in fact, the large truth that neither literature nor human beings attain maturity until intensity of emotion and perception is mated with a controlling *attitude* toward independent facts and experience; until multiplicity is molded into integration, until knowledge becomes wisdom. If all fragments of living are treated as equally significant there is no real significance in anything. "If all the world is *somebody* then no one's anybody," as the Gilbert song has it. There must be a hierarchy of values, and it is of the essence of mature literature that the artist clarifies and orders his material into an organic moral structure. If the bones of the body fail to get proper nourishment in early years, they remain permanently soft, like a baby's, producing a condition known as rickets. The condition of literature today (and of society, for it is impossible to separate them) is that of moral and spiritual rickets. The novelists, with certain outstanding exceptions, remain in a state of arrested development. They go on reflecting the flux of events, related to no firmly held point of view: there is the same vivid photographic and phonographic reporting of externals, with nothing pointing anywhere or leading to anything.

The only group who have achieved any organized scheme of values have done so by yielding to the easy salvationism of Marxism, conveniently omitting all those aspects of experience which re-

fuse to accommodate themselves in that creed. The Marxist sees the worker only as the under-dog, the victim of economic exploitation. So, indeed, do most of the novelists of "social significance." Man is regarded from one aspect of his nature only; he is a cog in a machine, or a unit in an economic system—a method of approach as limited as the Nazi method of regarding him as a drop in a racial bloodstream. He is the helpless victim of his environment; an object of pity only. They see him in terms of his limitations, not in terms of his potentialities. Compare for instance *Studs Lonigan* with *How Green Was My Valley*. The latter was not, of course, a novel of direct social propaganda, but it gave a *complete* picture of an industrial community. Its critical implications cried out on every page, it held a steady vision, and it created complete human beings, alive and thoroughly human, lovely and ugly, noble and base.

We can see what we have lost if we compare the great panoramic canvases of the nineteenth century novelists and their comprehensive moral and social visions, with our modern specialist studies. The modern collects materials, illustrates innumerable facts and facets of experience. He often writes extraordinarily well; describing with clarity, candor, accuracy and acuteness; recording, printing, fixing scenes and characters of all sorts and conditions. But the truth which a fine novel reveals is of a much wider, subtler and more active quality. It is a *positive* consciousness about life to which everything in the book is related; a defined pattern in which it is all seen; it is a fable embodying the standards of a culture; it interprets life, it does not only "present" it.

Today we have plenty of critical and constructive books of what we might call "applied" literature; books *about* our modern problems, analyzing, discussing and explaining the modern world. But we lack books which *create* a vision in living terms. In the nature of things, much of our social reorganization is a matter for experts. But the ideas of spiritual reality and human justice which lie behind all reform are the business of everyone, including our novelists. Someone once said that the League of Nations touched nothing that it did not adjourn. Is that to be the fate of the novel in the present crisis?

## SONG FOR EPIPHANY

Dear God, back, back to Thee again  
The questing Kings:  
And back to Thee our questing dreams  
On wearied wings.

Love brings Thee incense, Lord, and gold  
In fretted strands:  
But I, apart and wistfully, must fold  
These empty hands.

Dear God, I thought to make for Thee a song  
These questing years:  
Take back tonight my muted heart,  
My wordless tears.

SISTER MARY THECLA

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## TO A CHRISTKIND

*(Made in Germany)*

If I could make a cradle  
Of my finger tips  
I might swing you to sleep.  
If I could teach sweet hymning  
To my breath-hushed lips  
I might sing you to sleep.  
Someone who loved children  
Fashioned your swaddling bands,  
Round and round and round, and  
Folding in both your hands.  
Someone who prayed for love  
That others wished and sought,  
Caressed your warm, curved cheeks  
With happy thought.  
When, this eve, I give Your taper flame  
In this most intimate, homely rite;  
I pray, that though my hopes be the wax  
And my joy the wick, they both unite  
To send within a darkened, humble room  
A lovely, holy, kindling light  
For the one who fashioned You with care—  
Tonight, Love, tonight.

SISTER MARY MAURA

## IN TEMPORE BELL

*(after Saint John of the Cross)*

The day renews its ancient pain  
Across the prehistoric span  
And man has bled to find again  
Salvation in the blood of man;

The apple of the orchard's eye  
Is rotting in the sterile shade  
And we who carved the woodman's axe  
Have felt the keenness of the blade.

The disappointment of the bloom,  
The myrtle withered on the bough,  
The termite in the raftered hall—  
Are images of passion now.

Lovers, give up the dark, and stand  
Where lotus nor acanthus bloom  
And nothing ask for your desire  
But daylight and dusty room.

The crisis of the night is spent  
Upon your separated lips  
The ambiguities of dawn  
Are metaphors of your eclipse.

No longer in despite of death  
Debate the high Platonic theme  
But search obedience of breath  
For abdication of the dream

As hair deserts the harrowed skull  
We flee the roots we fed upon  
And choose for envy of our eye  
The sculpture of the skeleton

We that were men of matchless taste  
Must plough the undetermined sod,  
For all the richness of our rhyme  
Exchange the poverty of God.

ROBERT SPEARIGHT

## DARK ANGEL

John had a voice  
Unheard in choir.  
His staff was of cedar,  
His scrip, of briar.

His loins were girt  
With the skin of a leopard  
Day and night  
For a Lamb and a Shepherd.

He fed on locusts  
And flowing honey  
In a land where Dives  
Was made of money.

John was an oak  
As strong as you find,  
No shaken reed  
By any wind.

Dark and comely  
And good to see,  
John was favored  
In Galilee.

He preached the Word  
Of the Lamb so well  
People thought him  
Emmanuel.

Though he blessed with water  
He said they most  
Had need of fire  
And the Holy Ghost.

John was a shadow  
Before a Flame,  
First born of woman,  
A prophet by name.

He leveled all the valley,  
Set the crooked straight,  
Raised the lowly  
And humbled the great.

When all was done  
There came to pass  
The asp in the heart  
Of Herodias.

ROBERT DAVID O'BRIEN

## STAR FOLK

*They were called, and they said "Here we are":  
And with cheerfulness they have shined forth  
to Him that made them. Bar. iii, 35.*

The little stars with shyly gleaming faces,  
Just newly born—from nothing freshly wrought,  
Came running up with all their dainty graces,  
Came happily who were His happy thought.

Then stood they round about Him softly saying,  
"Ah, here we are," in young and humble fright;  
He caught them up and held them—love allaying  
Their tiny fears, and bathed them in delight.

He loosed them then, and in ecstatic madness  
They sought the farthest reaches of the skies;  
Yet still they have not hid their blush of gladness  
Nor lost the vision of His wondrous eyes.

SISTER MARY ADA



# BOOKS

## POWERS BEHIND THE AMERICAN THRONE

THE PRESIDENT MAKERS. *The Culture of Politics and Leadership in an Age of Enlightenment. 1896-1919.* By Matthew Josephson. Harcourt, Brace and Co. \$3.75

FAR from the President makers being the wicked men that the robber barons were shown to be in Mr. Josephson's earlier work, the picture here is of political democracy carried "to a highly advanced zone." We think of the time of the earlier Rooseveltians and Wilsonians almost with envy; "we think of it as an Age of Enlightenment." And "we may note its failures, drawing lessons also from the remarkable historical parallels between the earlier cycle of reform and that which began again after 1929." In this spirit the book covers the time from the election of McKinley with the help of Mark Hanna, to the death of President Wilson. And if there is little conclusive evidence of what the foreword affirms, namely, that the age boasted a technique, President Making, for reproducing remarkable and diverse characters, it is none the less interesting to see straggling happenings whipped into the march of events, and groups of men working for their own ends turn out to be the forces of the age.

But the virtues of a book like this are no easier to see than its defects. The jacket speaks of it as group biography, social panorama, the history of ideas. In that case, there should be in the book somewhere the philosophy of the historian. That is much more important to the reader than any of the persons or events. Talk about better economic democracy is not enough. An exchange of the evils of capitalism for the evils of another kind of group control is not enough. Another way may be more insidious in its methods, more destructive of human, personal values. The implication in this kind of writing is that previous versions of the same period have been done by writers woefully lacking in the clear insight revealed here and now. But when the insight suggests that democracy has been close to stupid in some of its failures, and can do with being remade somehow by new social builders, we have a right to ask for more fully stated notions on social philosophy. Because they are not given, this book is not as forthright as it may seem.

WILLIAM A. CAREY

## A MASTER CRITIC VIEWS THE PAGEANTRY OF LETTERS

PAGEANT OF LETTERS. By Alfred Noyes. Sheed and Ward. \$2.50

THIS book contains nineteen essays on literary figures from Chaucer to Alice Meynell; as such, it might be dismissed by the superficial scanner as another of the elegant, secondary works which wide reading and vanity conspire to foist on the public in the name of criticism. Nothing could be more incorrect than such a judgment on Mr. Noyes' book. Each of its essays relates to the others and all find a common ground in the author's philosophy and way of life. To Mr. Noyes, literature has dignity and importance and he writes of literary subjects with passionate interest, knowing that the great men of letters were no triflers, but among the most thoughtful and sensitive of their various times. Writers, to him, are philosophers with the gift of communication

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and his criticism of them embraces their double function; he plumbs their depths of thought and he indicates the beauties of the form wherein they have expressed their thoughts. Consequently, the essays in *Pageant of Letters* represent, not writing for writing's sake, but writing for thinking's sake; each sentence in them is carefully considered and has weight and importance. They do not seek to amuse the reader with a lot of superior personalia about their subjects; instead they provide insight into the art and meaning of Chaucer, of Marlowe, of Shelley, an insight implemented by a complete acquaintance with the works of the authors and a long life of study.

In the strictest sense, this book contains a series of appreciations. As commonly used with reference to criticism, "appreciation" has come to have an unhealthy connection with the languorous periods of Pater and his impressionist followers, who familiarized the public with rapturous admiration and loud advocacy as a substitute for sane and balanced judgment. In our own time, the followers of Mr. T. S. Eliot have gone entirely too far in their efforts to popularize the classic attitude in criticism. On the one hand we were given a purely subjective latitude that degenerated into the puffing and nonsense of the newspaper review, the Burton Rascoe sort of thing that *would* make an impression at any price; on the other hand the followers of Eliot have wrought earnestly in the direction of high-browism, dryness and pedantry. In *Pageant of Letters*, Mr. Noyes approaches the pattern of the perfect critic, as expressed in the following quotation from Max Beerbohm:

First, the surrender to a work of art, the sensitive delight in it and passionate absorption of it. There are critics who never get beyond that stage, and very good critics too, many of them; but incomplete. We are grateful to them for having rapture and for passing it on to us; but we want to know *why* they and we are in such raptures. In other words, a critic ought to be able to use his brain as well as his heart.

Mr. Noyes comes close to this golden mean; he thinks strongly and he feels strongly. Except in the essays on Landor and Aldrich, which are pleasant but commonplace, there is a striking originality about the author's views; they are intelligently novel and they make the reader think. Especially striking are Mr. Noyes' opinions on Dickens, Browning and Stevenson.

J. G. E. HOPKINS

## A PANORAMIC CANVAS OF THE MARCH OF MAN

MIND THROUGH THE AGES. *A History of Human Intelligence.* By Martin D. Stevers. Doubleday, Doran and Co. \$3.75

IF the merit of a book depended only on the labor which went into its making, this volume's merit would be immense. There would seem to be nothing in all the range of the sciences, the crafts and the arts from which the author has failed to draw material for his book. Mr. Stevers endeavors to reconstruct for the reader the course of "approximately two billion years" and while the reconstruction is often, even in its most assured passages, highly dubious or even demonstrably false, it is always attractively told.

*Mind Through the Ages* is a story with a moral. Its avowed aim is the presentation of "new understandings" about the nature of man which the patient brilliance of science has at last made possible for us. Thus, as one fruit of his long labor, the author advances the proposition that education must cease now to be a mere process of "convincing" the young. In language which is somewhat unfair to its own meaning, we are told that "outworn and mistaken notions of man as a creature ruled by intelligence" must be discarded. That is, edu-



cation must realize that instincts and emotions and other human faculties besides intelligence play a decisive role in the shaping of character and life; and therefore these factors must be "conditioned" to proper behavior right from the plastic years of young childhood. This will be anything but "new," of course, to one who is at all familiar with the age-old principles of Catholic pedagogy, but it is gratifying, nevertheless, to find the principle itself so warmly championed.

Nowhere in the whole book does the facility of the author's pen appear more attractively than in the early pages where he gathers the data of many sciences into a very readable narrative of what we know about the remote antiquity of the earth. However—as is so often the case in popularizations of this kind—where evolution is concerned the narrative does a spectacular job of overrunning its own data. Everything, even intelligence itself, is represented as evolving naturally from primordial non-living matter; and we find ourselves descended not merely from the apes but, ultimately, from primeval gases! It is the old, familiar pan-evolutionist procedure, which Belloc once called "the shoe-horn argument." Accounts of fascinating experiments shade into a recital of ingenious speculations thus provoked; and these evolve almost imperceptibly, by progressive assertion, into flat statements of how various mutations "obviously" took place. Perhaps the author's eloquent enthusiasm beguiled even himself! For certainly, before beginning this part of his narrative, he had spoken in very different words of man's power of conscious thought—"nobody can say how or why we have this attribute!"

When speaking of the Church, Mr. Stevers occasionally betrays a startling misunderstanding of Catholic fact or doctrine, but always there is manifest in his language an admirable endeavor to be fair and unprejudiced. One marvels at the flexibility of mind which can deplore "the self-stultification of search for God through asceticism" and yet describe the Benedictine Rule as "superb" and the medieval monasteries as "invaluable."

In general, this is a book in which there is much of good and much of bad, much that is admirable and much that is grievously misleading. There are subtle contradictions and too often we find ingenuous interpretations of historic facts inserted into the narrative as if they, too, were part of history's record. But it is the book of a man who has the welfare of mankind sincerely at heart and who has devoted a gifted pen to laborious service of that cause.

JOSEPH BLUETT

## MASTERPIECES

### FROM THE OLD ENGLISH

**WORD-HOARD.** By Margaret Williams. Sheed and Ward. \$4

IN the past few years we have witnessed the sealing of century vaults that are to preserve for future cultures and civilizations the artifacts of our present era. *Word-Hoard* is a book that should be included among some of the treasures of this era to be preserved for coming centuries. To read this book is to uncover a more perfect index of the culture of past centuries—a culture just as worthy, if not more so—of being preserved for future generations.

Margaret Williams, the daughter of Michael Williams, former editor of the *Commonweal*, is a Religious of the Sacred Heart, and associate professor of English at Manhattanville College, New York. She received her Master's degree in English, with First Class Honors, at Oxford University, and gives us a charming account of the results of her scholarship. The book consists of "passages from Old English Literature from the Sixth to the Eleventh Centuries," translated and arranged by the author in such a way that the poetry and prose of

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This is definitely not a book to be read at one sitting. Rather, it is an anthology to be studied and enjoyed and read and reread at leisure. The numerous scholarly appendices and the index make it suitable for use in colleges and universities for the study of English literature. The publishers are to be congratulated on the publication of this monument to Catholic scholarship.

E. J. FARREN

BRIGHT JOURNEY. By August Derleth. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50

IN a combination of biography and novel, Mr. Derleth presents the life of Colonel Hercules Dousman, fur trader at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. "Certain aspects of this life have stirred the author's imagination"; hence a small portion (not pointed out) is fiction. The title is taken from a prediction that young Dousman's life would be a bright journey; it is a dull enough journey for the reader to follow for at least half of the book. Written in a stilted style (the dialog in particular is artificial), the story opens in 1812 on Mackinac Island just as the British are to take over this and other sections of the Michigan Territory, and follows the life of the then twelve-year-old Hercules through his adventures at Prairie du Chien until 1843, when the wealthy widower is about to remarry.

The author gives a good picture of the unjust treatment suffered by the Indians at the hands of the whites, and a drawn-out account of the frequent troubles rising between them. Young Dousman is a noble champion of the Indians. This nobility of character is not always evident in his love affairs. There is one decidedly unsavory passage, which, if historical, could have been handled with much greater delicacy; if not historical, it should have been omitted. The prolonged romance between Dousman and the wife of his business partner, whose death brings a climax to the story, turns out to be honorable enough, though there are continual suggestions that it may not.

HUGH F. SMITH

THE SACRED BOND—HAPPINESS WITH HOLINESS IN FAMILY LIFE. By Edgar Schmiedeler, O.S.B., Ph.D. P. J. Kenedy and Sons. \$1.35

THIS book is a series of eight carefully prepared sermons on Matrimony. In an attractive manner Father Schmiedeler calls for holy fathers and mothers, holy families who will build the Christian foundations in the Social Order. Marriage is a God-made institution. The unceasing grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony forms and consecrates the smallest unit of the Church, the Christian family, the Church in miniature, the building stone for the Church Universal. Begetting and rearing children is the prime purpose of the family. The home performs its functions when the parents and children are intimately bound together in a great variety of natural and supernatural ways. Economic arrangements that can restore some productivity to the homes and give the members of the family many opportunities for mutual cooperation are most helpful.

The family should engage wherever possible in some program of working, playing and praying together in their own little unit. In this way the family can be a great source of happiness in this life and lead its members to happiness eternal. It would be well to organize the family on a liturgical basis, live the liturgy in the family circle, as well as in the parish church. In the family the children learn to pray and live with the Church. The traditional views of the Church, her marriage laws regarding the prime social institution are here handily brought together.

JOHN C. RAWE



# ART

THROUGH February the Morgan Library is holding an exhibition called *The Animal Kingdom*, which is one of the most entertaining and enlightening of the many shows now running in New York. The main bulk of the exhibition consists of a couple of hundred pictures of animals in illustrations to manuscripts and printed books. Since the illustrated books of classical times have perished to practically the last scrap, these animals date from the Christian centuries, ranging from the early middle ages to William Blake. Several of the most extraordinary books in the Library have been taken apart and spread in frames around the room. The effect is like a treasure house of ruby and sapphire and gold, for these manuscript pages have conserved, "as fresh as paint," the colors that were boldly laid on them long ago. The Morgan Library walls hint at the vanished richness of the great cathedrals when their moldings and carvings, their very fabric, smoldered like their windows with barbaric, subtle splendors of blue and red and gold.

The exhibition is intelligently arranged according to the context in which the animals appear in the various books. Case by case the animals are herded in categories of fable, sport, mythology, symbolism, science and pseudo-science and so forth. Such classification is intelligent, because, for well over a thousand years, man examined animals, indeed the whole world, with an eye to what he could extract in the way of moral edification or other use. During most of the time covered by the books in this show, there was nothing like the scientist's hankering to have a look just for the sake of looking, to investigate just to see where investigation might lead. The animals, being thought of only as they minister to man, were not considered for their own sakes and so were disposed on the page with the freest and most arbitrary elegance.

As might be expected, the pictures in the exhibition tell one little about the real look of the animals, for even the barnyard hen appears transmogrified into a shape as rare as the phoenix. The pictures tell all, however, about the men who painted them, and show how the people of the early and high middle ages saw the whole world through analogy and symbol. There are the great symbols, known to all, of the ox and the lion and the eagle who stolidly support writing-pads for the Evangelists, "secretaries of the Holy Ghost," to jot down their dictation. And then there are the masses of more learned symbols set forth in the Bestiary, that great story book of animals which point a moral and adorn a tale.

One of the most beautiful things in the exhibition is a manuscript of the Persian equivalent of the Bestiary, called the Description of Animals and their Properties. This great picture book was painted just before 1300 in a style which is the oddest hybrid of the styles of China and Mesopotamia, the result of this miscegenation being one of the loveliest halfbreeds in all art. Translations of the text, framed with each picture, let one right into the spry, sensuous, practical and unmoral mind of the mediaeval Persians. Though Dante's contemporaries, they hardly thought of symbolism. They valued animals for the medicines to be extracted and so compiled their book of animals exactly in the manner of a herbal (might one say *fauna*?). They would go to considerable trouble and expense to get powdered hoofs and horns that would keep them from being pestered by babies crying at night, and they had vanity enough to make them stomach some pretty strong messes in the hope of ridding themselves of skin diseases or even freckles.

All in all, the Morgan Library exhibition of *The Animal Kingdom* should certainly not be missed. It might also be added that the catalog, written with care and well illustrated, is an excellent dollar's worth.

A. HYATT MAYOR

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# THEATRE

**OLD ACQUAINTANCE.** It is a joy to all theatre-goers to have Jane Cowl return to New York. It is a pity, however, that she did not return to us in a play wholly worthy of her.

*Old Acquaintance*, written by John Van Druten and produced by Dwight Deere Wiman at the Morosco Theatre, is at once so good and so weak that a critic groans over the task of reviewing it fairly. Its settings are admirable. It is superbly directed and acted. It has Jane Cowl and Peggy Wood as its stars, and Kent Smith as its leading man. Nevertheless, with all this, *Old Acquaintance* is offensive to conscience and good taste.

Its heroine, Katharine Markham, (Jane Cowl), is a middle-aged spinster novelist, "living in sin," with Rudd Kendall (Kent Smith). Neither is, nor has been, married; but we understand that Kendall is a poor young man and that Katharine is too good a writer to be financially very successful! Rudd, however, is perfectly able to support himself. There is no reason why the pair should not marry, except that "drama" demands an irregular relation. Following this note, the playwright pictures Katharine as a high-minded type of woman who presents her lover to her girl rival in the final act.

The girl's mother is Katharine's life-long friend, Mildred Drake, a writer of cheap and popular fiction. She has a kind heart, oddly combined with a catty nature, and Peggy Wood interprets her as perfectly as Miss Cowl interprets the other star role. Indeed, the acting throughout *Old Acquaintance* is something to see.

In worldly success Mildred has the best of it. But she also has a daughter Deirdre, who loves and admires Katharine more than she does her own mother. When Deirdre falls in love with Katharine's lover, (knowing nothing of the relation between the pair), Katharine has her first awakening to the quicksands undermining her own position. Mildred then waspishly reveals the truth about Katharine to her daughter.

At this point Mr. Van Druten decides to clear up the moral atmosphere. He shows us Katharine's deepening mortal distress, which develops when Deirdre, her faith and illusions gone, rushes off—ostensibly to "live in sin" herself. She doesn't do it; but Katharine thinks she does.

It is all good stuff, dramatically, but weakened by the obvious fact that Katharine has never before felt the slightest twinge of conscience over her own moral lapses. She has been happy as long as her double life ran smoothly. In the end she presents Rudd to Deirdre and is reconciled to Deirdre's mother, with whom she has had a quarrel. The curtain falls as the two life-long friends, Katharine and Mildred, settle down cosily to a feast of tea and talk. One cannot help feeling that Katharine will not allow herself to be lonely very long!

Let me repeat that the acting is superb and that neither Miss Cowl nor Miss Wood has ever given us better stage work. The young girl, played by Adele Longmire, is beautifully done, and the smaller roles are admirably put over by Anna Franklin, Edna West and Hunter Gardner. Nevertheless, those quicksands are shifting and crawling before our eyes.

**THE OLD FOOLISHNESS.** There is little to be said about Paul Vincent Carroll's latest play, which failed at the Windsor after a few performances, except that its failure is easily understandable. Neither John Golden's excellent production nor Rachel Crowther's expert direction could save it.

Mr. Carroll's first two plays had enormous success, and deserved it. His third, like *The Old Foolishness*, which is his fourth, was off the stage after a few performances. Apparently Mr. Carroll is now giving us his boyhood efforts, or he is pot-boiling.

ELIZABETH JORDAN



# FILMS

**ARIZONA.** The chief merit of this elaborate film is that it presents all the obvious thrills of the familiar Western on a plane approaching the dramatic. The production is superior, and the basic story written by Clarence Buddington Kelland is a vast improvement on the hackneyed material generally used to fill in between Indian massacres and running gunfights, even though it does unfold against the Civil War period about which no constant moviegoer can now be decently ignorant. The plot, which Wesley Ruggles has animated and which the photography of the piece enhances, deals with the struggle of a young girl to establish a freight business in competition with the boss of budding Tucson. Added excitement arises from Indian attacks on the settlement which turns to the Confederate Army for protection but only until the arrival of the hero and Union troops. The tale is spun in the serious mood of frontier history for the most part but allowance is made for comic relief. Jean Arthur is excellently cast as a kind of righteous Calamity Jane, with William Holden, Warren William and Porter Hall for support. This is a stirringly executed bit of Americana with enough entertainment possibilities to hold the family spellbound. (Columbia)

**FLIGHT COMMAND.** Taking an obvious cue from the current preparedness furor, this aerial melodrama is on the inspirational side as it goes into the matter of the naval air arm in some detail. But the main interest is personal rather than military, centering about a young ensign assigned to the famed Hell Cats direct from training who finds some difficulty in convincing the veterans of his eligibility. The problem is aggravated when he is suspected of stealing the commander's wife, but both his innocence and his courage are established when he rescues the squadron leader during maneuvers and makes a difficult landing in the fog. Frank Borzage has brought fresh realism to the action scenes, and air-plane shots, at this point in the cycle, are not so overpoweringly familiar as they will be a little later. As for the tangled story, it is deftly told and resists being forced into the margin by the purely visual excitements. Robert Taylor, increasing his stature with each new part, is convincingly serious as the newcomer, and Walter Pidgeon and Ruth Hussey are fine as the commander and his emotionally puzzled wife. The picture is recommended as *topflight* entertainment for all. (MGM)

**SECOND CHORUS.** If it were not for Fred Astaire's nimble legs, this pedestrian musical comedy would have no visible means of support. The story abuses the privilege of its type to be tenuous, relating how a college musician fails to graduate just to remain with the girl manager of the band. When she leaves to join Artie Shaw, the collegian complicates her career by his jealousy but finally wins his objective, which is not a diploma. Henry C. Potter's diffuse direction is just one of the disappointments in a picture enlivened only by Astaire's dance routines, and Paulette Goddard, Burgess Meredith and Charles Butterworth are far from happily situated. This is only, and just about, passable family amusement. (Paramount)

**SHE COULDN'T SAY NO.** This is a legal trifle, drawing its mild humor from that kind of bewilderment which passes for complications of plot in minor comedies. A lawyer, working on an airport site deal, finds himself opposing his secretary in arguing a breach of promise action. The solution of the latter case also solves the airport problem by as far-fetched a coincidence as could be imagined. Roger Pryor and Eve Arden are adequate to an average family chore. (Warner)

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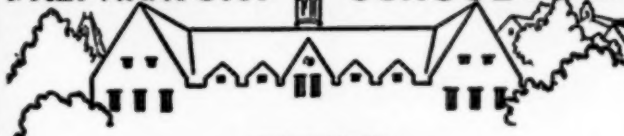
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DURING the last few weeks, the newspapers and the radio have been busily engaged in announcing lists of champions in a variety of fields. . . . In the department of sports, a few chosen individuals received the accolade as leaders for 1940. . . . From the world of the silver screen, there flashed from coast to coast the names and the photographs of the ten movie stars with the greatest pull at the box-office. . . . 1940 begot more All-American football teams than any previous year. . . . The ten top-flight achievements by scientists during 1940 were laboriously compiled. . . . In the sartorial realm, a list of the ten best-dressed women for 1940 was completed and released, with accompanying photographs, to the public. . . . The ten best-dressed men were acclaimed. . . . The ten greatest statesmen for 1940 were hailed, and the ten persons most highly publicized during the year were ranked and given some more publicity. . . . Other compilations of the ten best this and the ten greatest that adorned the printed page and sped on the air waves as the year 1940 stopped making history and turned the arduous task over to 1941. . . . The lists dealt with excellence in some form of material activity. They did not treat of the people who were best in themselves. . . . There was no list of the ten best men, no list of the ten best women. . . . There must be such lists somewhere. . . . And there are such lists. . . . The angels compiled them, and they are now completed for the year 1940. . . . There is a list of the ten best men in the United States for 1940. . . . And a list of the ten best women for the year. . . . Why these persons are accorded top ranking is described in detail. There are no photographs. No publicity at present. But there will be an enormous amount of favorable publicity about these people on a certain day in the future, on the very last day in fact. . . . If we could see these two lists, we would be very much surprised. Our eyes would be opened, we would realize how amazingly different is the set of values the angels use in making up their lists from the set of values which guide the mundane list makers.

Were some enterprising newspaper reporter to steal a quick look at the angels' lists, and were some newspaper to publish the data gleaned by his brief glimpse, the account might run somewhat as follows. . . .

(The lists, compiled by angels, of the ten best men and the ten best women in the United States for 1940 were not released for publication. Announcement was made that the lists would not be given to the public before Judgment Day. One of our reporters, however, was in a position to glimpse a few names on each list, and we give below his findings. Publication of the matter does not mean that this newspaper agrees with the angels' evaluations. The names and data copied by our reporter from the lists follow:)

Peter F. —, aged 58, machinist. After twelve years of married life, his wife ran off with another man. In the twenty-six years that followed, he led a life of perfect chastity. Two of his daughters are nuns, one son a priest.

Father F. J. —, aged 54, pastor. His zeal for souls is outstanding.

Mrs. J. B. —, aged 48, scrub-woman. Out of her small earnings, she is educating a son for the priesthood. During 1940 she did not commit one deliberate venial sin.

Sister Mary —, aged 62. She has taught the first grade in a parochial school for forty years.

(This newspaper wishes to reiterate that publication of the above does not indicate agreement with the angels' viewpoint.)  
THE PARADISE